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LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

JANUARY 1903.

*Christian Thal.*¹

BY M. E. FRANCIS.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.



‘ALL that luggage on one carriage—and with three persons inside? No, that will not do. And where, then, do the highborn Herrschaften desire to go? To the Schöne Aussicht? Da oben.’ Here the driver of the droschke paused dramatically, and threw out his hand with an expressive upward sweep. ‘Right up there in the woods? But no; it is impossible—unmöglich. The gracious gentry must engage another carriage—an Einspanner will do. That, they know, can take up the big baggage; and the Herrschaften and the small-and-required-for-immediate-use-packages can remain where they are.’

The tall white-haired gentleman whom the coachman addressed made no reply to this persuasive harangue, but contemplated the speaker with a calmly thoughtful air, almost as though he

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had not heard. The young girl by his side, however, signalled hastily to the nearest one-horse fly, detecting, as it approached, a satisfied wink exchanged by the drivers of the respective vehicles, while even the stolid Teutonic faces of the porters were momentarily illuminated.

The elderly energetic maid, who had been standing by the piled-up truck, now came forward.

‘If you would get Mr. Lennox into the carriage, miss, I could follow with the luggage,’ she suggested. ‘There wasn’t any necessity for taking that other one; we could all have fitted quite well, and the luggage too—but since it’s here—’

‘Have you observed, Juliet,’ remarked the gentleman, rousing himself as his daughter laid her hand on his arm—‘have you observed what a magnificent head our driver has? It would quite interest me to learn his history. Do you notice the brow, and that curious width between the eyes? The fellow should be a dreamer.’

‘Get in, dear, won’t you?’ said Juliet, in a gentle persuasive tone. ‘Andrews will follow with the luggage. We have a long drive before us, and it is rather cold standing just here.’

Mr. Lennox pulled vaguely at the collar of his coat, as though with the intention of turning it up, but failed to accomplish his purpose, and continued to speculate as he mounted slowly into the vehicle.

‘It would not at all surprise me to learn that this man *was* a dreamer. If you come to think of it, the very life he leads would conduce to the development of the imaginative faculty. His employment, you see, does not exercise his intellect at all; after the slight effort of memory required for registering the street and house to which he is bound, his task becomes purely mechanical. Eye and hand work automatically, so to speak—You are not listening to me.’

Juliet, indeed, had been busily occupied in stowing away their travelling paraphernalia in various corners of the carriage, and was at that moment in the act of buttoning her father’s coat.

‘You are not listening to me,’ he repeated, his dark eyes full of reproach, his white brows slightly drawn together, ‘What do these men want? Where is my purse, child?’

‘I have paid the porters, sir; you don’t need to give them any more,’ put in Andrews, pushing aside the clamouring gepäckträger, who, taking note of the English gentleman’s weakness with

regard to the einspanner, deemed he might safely be imposed upon a little further.

With sudden irritation the old man turned upon them, upbraiding them in fluent German with a severity which caused them to draw back abashed. He turned to Juliet with a smile, however, as the coachman whipped up his horses.

‘At least my driver is no rogue,’ he said.

The girl, calling to mind the exceedingly knowing expression which she had recently observed in the far-apart orbs of the gentleman in question, was conscious of certain doubts, but was careful to keep them to herself.

‘Conceive,’ went on her father, pursuing his former train of thought—‘conceive the variety of experiences which must fall to this man’s lot. Imagine the different aspects of life that are daily presented to him. From his coign of vantage there’—indicating the box—‘he can look on at an ever-flowing, ever-changing tide of life—life which sweeps round him, and in which he has no part. To-day he encounters tragedy, perhaps; to-morrow, comedy. All manner of people sit in his vehicle; he stops before all sorts of places; he comes into momentary contact with his fellow-creatures of every kind and degree, in every variety of mood; they go their ways and pass out of his life, and he remains unmoved, unaffected by it all. Don’t you think all that is enough to give him food for reflection, little girl?’

He smiled at her pensively. Juliet smiled too with a quaint little air of tender indulgence, which contrasted oddly with their relation to each other and with her extreme youth.

Though she was very slenderly fashioned, and possessed of more grace of carriage than is usual in maidens scarcely more than halfway through their teens, she conveyed an impression of immaturity that was almost childishness. Her long silky fair hair was tied back with a ribbon; her skirts were not by any means of fashionable length. Moreover, as she glanced about her now her face wore a look of expectancy so complete, so blissful, that it could only have been assumed by one to whom the whole world was fresh and delightful.

Juliet’s eyes were very large and expressive. They were set sufficiently wide apart to please her fastidious father, and were in colour hazel, deepening sometimes to velvety brown, and at other times appearing to be full of golden light. Her brow was wide and high, her complexion very fair, the texture of the skin being exquisitely fine; for the rest it was a small face, conveying an

impression of unusual intelligence, and, moreover, an indefinite suggestion of spirituality—a face which, without being regularly beautiful, somehow charmed all beholders.

Now, Professor Lennox, on the other hand, was strikingly handsome, though he looked old—too old for his years. His tall figure was bent with study, his abundant hair, like the drooping moustache which shielded a too sensitive mouth, had been prematurely bleached by sorrow.

The droschke rattled along the Kaiser Strasse, past the green arcades which earned its name—Schönwald—for the little town, and the pretty gardens with their fountains and stretches of water; past the gay shops, and up the Berg Strasse, up, up, always overshadowed by greenery, until at last streets and even solitary houses were left behind, and there remained only the woods.

What woods! Towering beeches, sturdy oaks, graceful slender birches, with here and there a pine, ruddy of stem and gloomy of foliage. At this hour of the September afternoon the almost level rays of the sun came piercing through the branches, falling upon white-stemmed beeches and birches with dazzling, silvery radiance, turning the trunks of the firs to gold, bringing out a wonderful glow from the undulating ground beneath, which was thickly sown with the fallen leaves of many a year.

All round what unexpected jewels of light, afloat as it were, in the gentle green dusk! Here a leaf looking like a living emerald, there a flame of yellow, above the lambent blue of the sky; and now and then, where the trees grew less thickly, a curious effect of pearly, almost ethereal radiance, a kind of shimmering oasis in this desert of exquisite gloom.

Juliet suddenly rose from her seat with a gasp.

'Oh, look, Daddy!' she cried, 'look! Is not this enchanted ground? Do look at those trees—see how they are stretching out their arms to us. Listen to the leaves talking overhead. What are they saying? Don't you think they are promising us all kinds of good things?'

Her father looked at her and smiled; then a shadow fell upon his face.

'You are very like your mother, Baby,' he said.

'Baby' was the name he had given his wife, and he only used it to Juliet in moments of supreme tenderness.

After a moment he went on. 'You have more imagination than your mother; she was very observant—a witty creature, too,

with a sigh—‘but she was not fanciful like you, Juliet; and neither am I very imaginative—I wonder how you came by this faculty.’

‘I’m a freak,’ said Juliet. ‘But don’t you pretend you are not imaginative, Daddy. What about your contemplative cabman?’

‘Ah, that is another thing,’ said her father, and he launched forth once more into a discussion of their driver’s rare opportunities, his sadness laid aside for the nonce.

Presently they arrived at the *Schöne Aussicht*, a big, rambling, brand-new building, the barrack-like appearance of which was atoned for by its exquisite surroundings.

Shortly after their installation the Professor came into Juliet’s room, as she stood by the open window, drinking in the pure keen air, and letting her eyes wander over the wilderness of woods, the distant blue hills, and the little town which nestled in the valley below, and which was already making itself gay with a multiplicity of lights.

‘My dear,’ he said, ‘this is not what I expected.’

‘Isn’t it, Daddy? It is far more beautiful than I hoped for.’

‘Oh, yes, I daresay it is very beautiful, but I did not come here because of the view, you see; I came because I wanted to be quiet; I can’t be quiet in London, and I can’t be quiet at home.’

‘Yet most people think Moor’s Hill quiet enough,’ put in the girl. ‘I don’t believe anyone but my Professor would call it distractingly lively.’

‘My darling child,’ said the Professor, earnestly, so earnestly that he was obliged to walk close up to Juliet and put his hands upon her shoulders—‘my darling child, don’t tell me that it is possible for any man to think, much less to study, in a country place. Those cows alone—those cocks—oh, I sympathise with Carlyle! And the deer—when I know the deer are to be seen from my windows, how is it possible to avoid looking at and watching their movements and their manners? Yes, that is the worst of it—I get interested in the creatures, and can’t for the life of me help observing them. Do you remember how I once lost a whole valuable morning because I knew that an impudent little squirrel was catering for his larder close under my window?’

He laughed at the recollection, but Juliet’s face assumed an alarmed, not to say tragic, expression.

‘Do you know, I’m afraid there are squirrels here; I am almost sure I saw one just now.’

'Squirrels!' said Mr. Lennox, inconsequently waving his hand, as though the subject were too trivial to be dwelt upon—'squirrels! If we had nothing worse than poor little harmless squirrels to fear I should not complain. But there are *people* here, I find—people actually staying in the house; and, what is more, they come up by shoals every fine day to take coffee under the trees in front—right under my room. I felt alarmed when I saw the tables, so I questioned the waiter, and he informed me with the greatest triumph and jubilation that not only were there seven or eight Stück staying in the house, but that, as I tell you, crowds come up in the afternoon.'

'Never mind,' said Juliet, soothingly; 'you shall change rooms with me, dear; you can see nothing but woods and hills from this window, with just a glimpse of a little fairy town far, far beneath.'

'I shall know they are there, though,' said her father seriously—'fat good-humoured shopkeepers, with their fat comfortable wives and all their olive-branches. They will be drinking coffee within a stone's throw of me, or more probably their beloved beer, and they will be talking over their aunts, and cousins, and sausages, and the last circus that came to Schönwald; and I shall be benevolently sympathising with their satisfaction instead of pursuing the beautiful and the abstract in my upper chamber. They are more distracting even than cows and cocks!'

He was laughing, now, but somewhat ruefully, and released Juliet, after giving her shoulders a gentle little shake.

'It is a misfortune, my dear Baby, to be too richly endowed with the milk of human kindness,' he summed up, and went out of the room, still laughing.

Presently Andrews entered.

'The trouble I've had to get a little hot water,' she remarked. 'One would think I was asking for their hearts' blood! And when I told them you would want a bath every morning they very nearly fainted. I couldn't make the girl understand, so I had to go to the head waiter. And he said it would be quite impossible for you and Mr. Lennox to have one on the same day, for there's only one bath in the house.'

'I must go to the bathroom, then.'

'Excuse me, miss, I hardly think you would like that. The bathroom is right down in the cellars. There's one young gentleman here as goes down to it, they say, and he keeps it an awful time, plunging and splashing about for an hour and more; and it icy cold, too, for it stands to reason the poor young man couldn't

afford to pay for a warm one—a mark each they charge for that—and I know he can't be very well off. His room is up at the top, where I am, among all the cooks and waiters.'

'Well, it's a comfort to know there's at least one clean person in the house,' said Juliet, without noticing the somewhat agrieved tone in which the last remark was delivered. 'Only one bath—and Mr. Lennox said just now there were eight or ten people staying here. Do none of them tub?'

'I don't know, I'm sure, miss. There's a princess in the next room to this—one would think *she'd* like a bath in the morning.'

'A German princess, you see, Andrews. The clean young man is evidently an Englishman.'

'No, miss, that he isn't,' returned Andrews, with prompt decision. 'I caught sight of him just now going into his room—a handsome young gentleman, too, but not an Englishman—you only have to look at his head to see that. I often wonder to myself, miss,' she continued, ruminatively—long service entitled her to be as garrulous as she chose, and her lonely young mistress was often glad to prolong such conversations—'I often wonder to myself, miss, how it is that them foreign gentlemen never seem able to leave their heads alone. Now, our English gentlemen wash them and brush them, and have their hair cut every fortnight, say, and there's an end of it; but these foreigners, they must either be shaving their heads or trimming their hair like hearthbrushes, or else letting it grow long.'

'And what variety of head does this young man possess?'

inquired Juliet, laughing.

'Well, miss, I may have seemed to be finding fault with it, but upon my word I can't help saying so, he has a beautiful head of hair.'

Then it is long, I suppose?'

Well, not that long either, miss—not right down his neck like some have. But, anyhow, you'll see this young gentleman for yourself at *Tablio*.'

'*Tablio*' was Andrews's rendering of *table d'hôte*. Mr. Lennox would have preferred dining in a private room, but finding that the public meals amused Juliet, he kept his wishes to himself, and daily sat out eight or nine courses with praiseworthy patience.

CHAPTER II.



WHEN the gong sounded for supper the father and daughter went downstairs together, being ushered into the Speisesaal with great pomp by the head waiter.

‘Do you see?’ murmured the Professor to his daughter as, on the invitation of this functionary, they took their seats at a table in an alcove at the further end of the room, ‘there are quite a number of people here—four tables are prepared, you observe, besides that one in the balcony. What *did* Countess de Galphi mean by saying that after the Schönwald season was over this place was deserted?’

Juliet scarcely heard him: she was anxiously on the look-out for the young gentleman with the beautiful head.

The diners strolled in by twos and three; and though her eyes remained fixed upon the door, she kept up a running commentary for her father’s benefit.

‘Two old ladies, Daddy—two such terrible old ladies. One is very thin and looks as if she had been fed on Sauerkraut all her life, and the other—positively she is a perfect cube, as broad as she is long and as thick the other way through. Poor thing, she can hardly walk; she is trotting along just like those little toys that they sell in the Strand, you know—you wind them up, and they only cost a penny, and they break directly you’ve bought

them. . . . Really, Daddy, if you'd just turn your head you'd see what I mean.'

The Professor did not turn his head, but he smiled benevolently.

'Now there is a man coming,' she continued—'that's not he' (this half to herself)—'a man with an ugly nice face; oh!' dropping her voice, 'he's coming to the table next ours, so I can't enter into details. And now there's a jolly-looking elderly lady, who is making a regal bow to the waiters—I wonder if that's the princess. She is followed by a tall woman with a young back and an oldish face—perhaps that's the *dame de compagnie*. It is the princess, for I see she is being ushered into the balcony, away from the common herd. Poor thing, she must find it rather chilly out there at this time of night; and really, if it wasn't for the honour and glory of the thing, she might just as well sit inside, for the door is left open and she is in full view of the multitude. . . . And now'—her voice changed and she paused for a moment, and then leaned towards her father:

'Look round, Daddy; do, please, look round. You are so fond of analysing faces—tell me what you think of this one. Do you see the boy who is coming in now? He has a remarkable head if you like.'

Mr. Lennox turned in his chair and looked in the direction she indicated. A tall young man was just entering the room, and Juliet had identified him at first sight as the hero of Andrews's tale. His head was indeed a remarkable one, quite apart from the fact that the hair, nut-brown in colour and with golden lights, was, according to English notions, a little too artistically redundant. The brow was high, massive, with great fulness over the eyes, which were large with elongated corners; the features fine and clear-cut, the mouth in particular being sensitive and very handsome. The whole face had in it something of the statuesque, to which its pallor conduced—the pallor that belongs to the type and is associated with a peculiarly transparent and fine-grained skin but conveys no idea of delicacy. Any such suggestion, indeed, would have been contradicted by the vigour of the tall, well-knit frame.

'A beautiful boy,' said the Professor approvingly, after considering him for a moment. 'You did well to call my attention to him, Juliet—you have shown me something worth looking at.'

'But what do you see in his face?' cried the girl eagerly. 'Look at his brow—don't you think he must *do* something?'

Mr. Lennox returned to his quiet scrutiny, and Juliet, too, furtively watched. The young man, feeling their eyes upon him, sent a long penetrating glance in their direction, taking in the newcomers from head to foot, apparently, and then fell to examining the menu, drumming meanwhile upon the table.

'I know what he is,' exclaimed Juliet, suddenly; 'he is a musician. Look at his hands; see how he plays upon the table. It is not merely the Devil's Tattoo, you see. He is playing octaves, and now a little bit of chromatic scale, and now he is stretching his fingers—that man can take ten notes easily.'

'He might be a musician,' said her father, still reflectively contemplating the youth in question. 'That fulness about the brows would seem to indicate it. And his face altogether—yes, it certainly belongs to the artistic type. But who is his companion, I wonder? Her face, Juliet, is quite as interesting in its own way—not in such an agreeable way, I grant you, but what power, what tenacity of purpose! Look at the jaw and chin. That woman has got a will.'

A lady had hastily entered and crossed the room to the table where the young man sat—a table so far away from the alcove occupied by Juliet and her father that, as may have been divined, the discussion could be carried on without risk. The newcomer was of middle height and of indeterminate age; her harsh, strong face, with its heavy brows and marked features, had probably never looked young, and certainly did not look young now, recording as it did many sufferings and disillusion in hard and bitter lines. These momentarily disappeared when she smiled, the whole face softening then and brightening in a way that was not without its charm. She smiled now, as she paused a moment beside her companion, resting her hand upon his arm while she glanced over his shoulder at the menu; but her face almost immediately darkened again as he looked up with some evidently petulant remark. She shrugged her shoulders and sat down, not again speaking to him, but looking round the room while waiting to be served.

It was the custom of the *Schöne Aussicht* to invite its guests to supper long before the meal was actually ready. Now, though they had been summoned nearly a quarter of an hour before, the first dish had not yet appeared. Meanwhile the Lennoxes' nearest neighbour—the man with the 'nice ugly face,' to quote from Juliet's description—had been listening with quiet amusement to their various remarks and surmises. His dark moustache

twitched from time to time, his eyes, small and of no definite colour, but set about with kindly lines, twinkled. When Juliet had announced her discovery as to the nature of the young man's career he had nodded almost imperceptibly; but presently he fell to considering her father with an eager interest, only withdrawing his eyes when they had attracted the Professor's own. Then he produced a newspaper, which he perused during the pauses in the repast. Had the girl been less preoccupied she would have been interested in discovering that the paper in question was the *Standard* for though the arrangement of his hair—what remained of it—would not have called forth any strictures from Andrews, this man did not look like an Englishman.

But Juliet was absorbed in her musician. She watched his face and took note of how sensitive it was, how mobile; how it lit up when he smiled; she watched his hands, long and supple and always restless, now fingering his sleeve, now the table; she almost fancied she could distinguish the air he was playing.

By-and-by, quite suddenly, he pushed away his plate, got up, and went out of the room. His companion looked after him, half rose from her chair, and then, with a momentary lifting of the eyebrows, resumed her supper.

The room now seemed to Juliet to have grown dull and empty, the meal to be insufferably long. She lifted a corner of the curtain nearest to her and looked out at the placid starlit night.

'Shall we go out after supper, Daddy?'

'Not to-night, dear. I will do a little work, I think. I must secure an hour or two while the house is quiet.'

'May I walk in the woods with Andrews, then? They are so inviting. It will be cool and delicious after this stuffy room. Look out at the dear trees; they are beckoning to me.'

'You may go if you do not stray away too far. Andrews is a host in herself, and I should think these woods are very safe and quiet.'

But when Juliet made the same proposition to Andrews on going upstairs presently, it was not by any means so well received.

'Go out now, Miss Juliet, when there's so much to be done? All these boxes must be unpacked before bedtime; and when am I to get my supper?'

'I forgot your supper,' said the girl penitently, but with evident disappointment.

That of course settled the question. She knew Andrews too well to dream of interfering with what she often called 'the sacred meal.' She went to the window, threw it open, and leaned out. Oh! the woods, the woods! She had told her father just now that they were beckoning to her; as she leaned forth into the sweet fresh night they seemed to woo her. What music of swaying boughs, of rustling leaves—all the indescribable forest sounds! What gusts of cool spicy air, what mystery in those dim aisles, where only here and there a silver pillar caught the moonlight!

'Andrews,' she said suddenly, 'I must just go down there and stand under the trees for a few moments. They come close under this window, and you would hear me if I called. You can go on with your unpacking. I will stay quite near the house; I only want to feel the woods about me before I go to bed.'

Andrews was beginning to expostulate, but Juliet was already gone. The back-stairs close to her room led down to a door used chiefly by the hotel servants. Juliet met no one, and slipped out, past the kennel, where the great dog greeted her with a warning growl, across the grassy slope beyond—beneath the trees at last. She singled out a group of firs, and going up to one patted its rough bark caressingly.

'You are a warrior,' she said; 'you shall be my sentinel and take care of me.'

She remained quite still, gazing about her and inhaling the delicious fragrance. But all at once she started violently. A figure brushed past her, went forward a little way, and then, returning, came close up to her, bending forward as if to speak. Juliet, indeed, in her white dress looked sufficiently ethereal and unreal to have startled anyone at this hour; but it was she herself who was frightened at the silent advance of this shadowy form. It was a woman's form, moving with swift noiseless grace, the face still bent forward, as though the eyes would pierce the gloom.

Presently an arm shot forward and seized Juliet by the wrist. The girl screamed. The other, with a laugh and a half-contemptuous shrug, turned and glided away as quietly as she had come.

Juliet drew a long breath of relief; she had recognised the musician's companion. But she was trembling still; the woods were very lonely after all, and the distant trees took odd shapes, and the noises sounded more mysterious than ever—almost

uncanny, in fact. The charm was broken; in another moment she was flying across the moonlit space and up the steps, the big dog adding to her terror by barking violently and dragging at his chain. In characteristic fashion, however, she immediately composed herself, walked deliberately upstairs, and made no allusion to her momentary panic when Andrews commented upon her unexpectedly speedy return.

'It was growing rather chilly out there,' she remarked. Nevertheless, going once more to the window, she was soon again absorbed in the beauty of the night.

CHAPTER III.



'JULIET, Juliet!'

'Yes, Daddy dear.'

'I find it quite impossible to work; I cannot even collect my thoughts for a moment. It is maddening! It ought not to be allowed.'

The Professor's eyes were flashing fire; he had run his fingers distractedly through his hair so often that it stood out like a snowy nimbus round his head; his lip was actually quivering with wrath and woe; his hands were twitching.

'Daddy, what is the matter?'

'My dear child, don't you hear it? It has been going on for an hour and a half, and it is now nearly eleven o'clock. It is monstrous—enough to drive one out of one's senses! If one is not to have quiet at this time of night, when can one count on it? I'll speak to the manager at once. I'll put a stop to it.'

'But, dear Daddy, do tell me what *is* it,' pleaded Juliet, almost piteously.

'You don't hear it in this room—you are fortunate! What

do I mean? Oh, don't be dense, child. I mean the piano—the piano, of course. Come to my room and you'll hear it.'

In the Professor's room the distant sound of a piano could indeed be heard, but so muffled and far away that the tune was not distinguishable.

'That makes it all the worse,' cried Mr. Lennox, when Juliet had put forth this plea. 'One finds oneself unconsciously endeavouring to identify it. But I will make an end of this. I will tell the manager he has no right to tolerate a public nuisance.'

'Oh, don't,' cried Juliet eagerly. 'Please don't. I know it is that boy we saw downstairs—you remember you admired his face. I am sure he is poor. Andrews says he has got a room right up at the top among all the servants. Perhaps he is obliged to practise, and if the manager forbids him to use this piano he mayn't be able to play anywhere else. I'll—I'll run down and ask him to stop for to-night, and then to-morrow you can change rooms with me.'

Her father, still pacing up and down, gave a somewhat irritable consent, and the girl went quickly downstairs, pausing irresolutely, however, when she had reached the long corridor below. She could hear the music more distinctly now, and recognised the theme: Chopin's Ballade in A flat, played in a masterly fashion. Guided by the sound she went forward to the reading-room, which she entered very softly. The 'beautiful boy,' as the Professor called him, was, as she expected, seated at the piano, which was placed so that it faced the door. The little instrument, though old and worn, had been a good one in its day, and now rocked beneath his strenuous touch, and now sent forth sounds of magical sweetness.

Juliet paused just within the doorway, amazed, entranced, bewildered. What made this music unlike any she had ever heard? She had heard much, for she loved it passionately, and her father had spared no pains in the cultivation of this taste. Already she had listened to many noted players; but there was something about *this* player that seemed to set him apart from them all. In the same way the Ballade, every note of which was familiar to her, revealed under his fingers beauties which had hitherto been hidden from her, poetry which she could all at once interpret, but of which until now she had not possessed the key.

By-and-by she recovered herself sufficiently to look about her.

At the farther end of the room sat the princess and her companion, listening in a kind of condescending ecstasy, and murmuring 'Wunderschön' or 'Ausgezeichnet!' from time to time.

The musician's friend stood by the piano, with her hands behind her and her face rigidly set, apparently keeping guard; the man who had been the Lennoxes' neighbour at supper was also in the room, and outside the open window was gathered a little crowd of listening waiters and subordinates.

The player himself seemed quite unaware of his audience.

Juliet had observed with disappointment earlier in the evening that he did not appear to be wholly devoid of self-consciousness; his very mode of entering and leaving the room had denoted that he was aware of, and not averse to, attracting attention; once or twice, to her confusion, he had caught her glance, and had returned it with one which seemed to say, 'Yes, look at me; I am a person of importance.' But now he was wholly absorbed; his face was almost majestic in its repose, if that could be called repose which mirrored such manifold emotion. The eyes were downcast, the mouth firmly set; yet, just as the glassy water of a lake reflects all that passes across its surface, from a thundercloud to a butterfly, so did this face gather power as the strong supple hands came down upon the keys in full grand chords, and soften as the music grew more tender, and become dreamy and inspired with his theme.

Juliet's courage failed as she remembered her errand; at least she would wait, she thought, until he paused before venturing to put forward her father's plea. But he did not pause. At the conclusion of the Ballade, and without lifting his fingers from the keys, he passed, after a few modulations, into the 'Berceuse,' which he played with such exquisite delicacy and grace that Juliet was fairly transported. The poor Professor's irritation and her own anxiety to prevent his personal interference were alike forgotten; she was conscious of nothing but the music flooding her soul.

'Enough!' said a decided voice in German, almost before the last notes had died away. Juliet started as violently as the musician; but he recovered himself immediately, and turned round to cast an angry glance on his companion, who had stepped up to his chair and laid an imperative hand on his shoulder.

'What does that mean—*enough*? It is not enough. Here I am, and here I mean to stay.'

'Enough, I tell you,' she returned. 'Why are we here, then? That you may continue to wear yourself out? I will not allow it. Aber was? You want to be in the doctor's hands again, I suppose? Come, come—to bed!'

He shook off her hand.

'I will do what I like—I am not a child. Go away, Annola! You are tiresome. I wish to play, and I will play.'

Annola composedly walked up to the nearest chandelier, and, making a series of upward springs, extinguished one after the other the flaming gas-jets.

The ugly man looked up with a laugh, and rose.

'Good-night,' he said to the player in English, but with a slight foreign accent. 'You have given me a great deal of pleasure. I thank you very much.'

'Good-night,' returned the musician shortly, and with a formal bow; he was moodily watching the movements of Annola, who was now at work on the second chandelier.

The group outside the window melted away, and the princess and her companion, who had hitherto been mute, now rose in their turn and came forward with little sliding curtseys and enthusiastic compliments. The young man got up from his chair and again bowed, stiffly and unsmilingly.

'Come, you are on your feet at last,' cried his friend. 'You give me a great deal of trouble, you know. Well, are you coming, or must I finish this business?'

'What a bother you are, Annola! I hate you!'

This was spoken with a real boy's peevishness. Annola's face changed; she turned and came close up to him, saying something in a language which Juliet, now the only other occupant of the room, did not understand—an odd-sounding language that seemed to be made up of little words and to redound in vowels.

He flushed and bit his lips; then his face softened, and he stooped, with a laugh, and kissed her hand; after which without further protest he closed the piano.

A certain shyness had kept Juliet in her place at the farther end of the room; she had not dared to thank the musician as everybody else had done, and she thought it would seem ungracious to go away without a word. In the semi-darkness consequent on Annola's operations her presence would not be noticed by the preoccupied pair, she fancied, and when they were gone she too would slip upstairs to make what apologies she could to her father.

But before they had reached the door she heard Annola reply to some murmured query of the other :

‘It is the little one whom I saw in the woods just now—die kleine Engländerin. I took her for a ghost, you know. But I told you about it, Dummkopf!’

The young man unexpectedly turned aside, and went straight up to the shrinking little figure in its retirement.

‘You like the woods very much?’ he inquired, in slow deliberate English; ‘did you also like my music?’

‘Oh!’ exclaimed Juliet, and stopped short, catching her breath. He had taken her by surprise, and in any case she was incapable of expressing in words how much, how very much she had liked his music. But he looked at her transfigured face, and was satisfied.

‘Then I will play again. It was for myself before—now it shall be for you.’

Annola glanced sharply round, but made no remark; and before Juliet, once more conscience-stricken, had had time to stammer a reply his fingers were again wandering over the notes. How, indeed, could she have had the heart to object to what was so kindly meant; surely this would not have been the moment to make a protest which, no matter how delicately worded, must be to a certain extent wounding?

‘You have been wandering in the moonlight—you shall hear about the moonlight,’ he said, suddenly breaking off in his prelude, and at once beginning the first movement of the Sonata in C sharp minor.

A more competent critic than Juliet would have been struck by the perfection of his rendering; would have marked how, amid all its poetry, it never lost the perfect sincerity and simplicity which are essential to the just interpretation of Beethoven. To the girl the wonderful music was fraught with the very essence of the woods; it brought back to her all the impressions which had seized her at first sight of them—the wonder, the delight—a delight which was not so much the consciousness of actual bliss as a promise, an anticipation of some intangible future joy.

Presently the door opened and Professor Lennox came in, his face dark, not so much with displeasure as with disappointment. Juliet had failed to keep her promise; she had unexpectedly proved to be deficient in that moral courage for which he had always given her credit.

On first entering, however, his sense of just wrath gave place

to bewilderment. The large room was very imperfectly lighted, all the jets of gas near the piano having been extinguished; the young man, however, was playing with as much zest and unconcern as though the evening were but just beginning; and Juliet, his little Juliet, whom he had expected to find in an attitude of shrinking timidity, nervously waiting the moment when she might deliver her message—Juliet was sitting with rapt upturned face; even in the dusk he could see its silhouette against the dark velvet chair, the lips parted, the large eyes wide open—Juliet was listening in evident ecstasy.

All at once she turned and saw him, and before he had time to summon her she rose noiselessly and came swiftly towards him. There was no penitence in her face, only delight.

‘Daddy, Daddy,’ she whispered as soon as she was near enough, ‘is it not beautiful? And only think, he is playing it for me!’

Now, the Professor was endowed with a very keen sense of humour—so genuine a sense that he many a time positively enjoyed a laugh against himself. He laughed now, and putting his arm round her drew her down beside him on the sofa.

‘Oh, Daddy,’ she murmured, drawing a deep breath, ‘Daddy, is not this very good?’

The Professor listened for a moment, and then darted a keen glance from under his white brows at the musician.

‘Yes, Baby—it is very good.’

There was something magnetic in the quality of this playing; it charmed the old man as it had charmed the girl. Mr. Lennox had come downstairs irritated, and with nerves on edge, his predominant feeling towards the player being strong dislike; yet before he had listened to him for five minutes he succumbed to his influence. Despite his recent annoyance, no one loved music better than the Professor. It was, perhaps, his very love for it that had caused him to feel so intensely irritated with the persistent recurrence of sounds too distant to be identified, yet sufficiently penetrating to be perpetually intrusive—to the detriment of fixed and serious thought. He listened now with a softened face, sometimes glancing tenderly at Juliet’s shining eyes and glowing cheeks, and at other times gazing intently at the player.

‘That young man interests me,’ he said, half to himself, as the final notes were struck; ‘there is something electric in his personality. He will go far in his career.’

This agreeable prognostication he repeated a few moments later to the musician himself, shaking him warmly by the hand the

while. The young man flushed with pleasure and thanked him repeatedly.

'Ah,' he said with an expressive gesture, 'but it is so long to wait. I want to begin my career now.'

'*Tout vient à qui sait attendre*,' said the Professor, smiling. 'Proverbs are useful things sometimes, particularly for young people.'

'Monsieur, you are wrong,' said Annola, turning on him suddenly. 'Proverbs are foolish, and may often be read in different ways. You English, for instance, might translate the one you have just quoted, "Everything comes to him who knows how to expect."'

'No, no; we are more sensible than that,' cried Mr. Lennox, laughing. 'We have, on the contrary, a saying, "Blessed is he that expecteth not, for he shall not be disappointed."'

'But I, for one, expect much,' cried the youth, his face again flushing. 'I expect everything, and so, according to Annola's theory, everything will come to me.'

'But no, but no,' cried Annola, speaking rapidly and excitedly. 'I say on the contrary, "*Tout vient à qui n'attend rien*." My God, yes! Everything comes—sorrow, disappointment, disillusion, one on top of the other, *pêle-mêle*—and you, who expected nothing, are breathless, stunned.'

'Bah, you are a croaker,' cried the other sharply. 'I expect another kind of everything, and I will get it. I expect fame, success, all that life can give, and I mean to have it.'

Juliet looked at him critically, almost disapprovingly; she liked and admired his ambition, but something in his tone jarred upon her. She glanced inquiringly at her father to ascertain if he shared her feeling; but he was wholly absorbed in contemplating the woman called Annola, in whom he seemed to take a vivid interest. The musician meanwhile had been quick to read Juliet's expression.

'You do not like what I say? You think I boast?'

'I think,' she said, with a little smile, 'it would be better to let someone else say these things for you.'

He looked at her quite unabashed, his grey eyes full of mischief.

'I assure you I am only stating facts. You call me conceited—many people have called me conceited before—but, believe me, it is not so. I am simply telling you what I am going to do.'

Juliet looked dubious, and he suddenly ceased laughing.

'You have heard me play,' he said in a low voice; 'do you mean to tell me I shall not succeed?'

'No, no,' she hastened to reply, in a tone of such conviction that he could not doubt her sincerity; 'indeed, I am sure you will.'

'I also am sure,' he said quietly.

At this moment the door was opened by a sleepy waiter, who glanced round him in astonishment at the semi-darkened room, and then inquired in an aggrieved tone if the gracious Herrschaften intended to remain much longer; the lights were generally extinguished long before that time, but, of course, if the Herrschaften did wish to remain he could wait a little. A general move towards the door ensued, and the two couples parted in the passage, the musician and his companion making their way towards the back-stairs, while the Lennoxes ascended to their comfortable rooms on the first-floor.

Andrews was waiting in some dudgeon for her young lady.

'If you had unpacked as many boxes as I have, Miss Juliet, you would know what it was to be ready for your bed. There's this book here, too, has been waiting and waiting for you I don't know how long. It is the Visitors' Book, and the head waiter made a special favour of your writing your name in it to-night; but it will be too late to bring it back to him now.'

Juliet examined the book with eager curiosity. Here were the princess's name and title duly set forth, followed by the plebeian scrawls of 'Maria and Emma Krell'—those would be the two terrible old ladies; next came in a small neat man's hand, 'Horace Bulkeley, Engineer.'

'I'm glad I know his name,' said Juliet, 'so that I needn't go on calling him the Ugly Man. But I want to see about the other two, and to find out what relation that odd-looking woman is to the clever boy.'

But the names, when she found them, gave her no information on this point; they occupied the top of a blank page. First came 'Annola Istó,' with no indication of the status of its owner, or whether she were married or single. Juliet, after glancing at it, suffered her eyes to pass on quickly to the line immediately below, and to linger on it. The words were written in a delicate flowing hand that had, nevertheless, much firmness about it, and every letter was distinctly formed.

'Christian Thal, Musician.'

(To be continued.)

Eighty Years Ago.

ON the Great North Road, some sixty miles from London, the passenger may observe on the right-hand side an old grey tower which peeps above the trees. It has no architectural claims, but, like the towers of all old churches, is beautiful in its simplicity. To me it is an object of interest, for, in the church of which it forms a part, I was christened more than ninety years ago. Three generations have since passed. That church has always been to me an object of deep reverence, but the tower was a happy-hunting ground for my brothers and myself at Christmas time, when we climbed up the broken stone steps to the belfry, and captured the sparrows and starlings which in misplaced confidence had sought shelter there.

The old parsonage has been long since pulled down and replaced by a modern mansion. When the time came for its removal, the mind of the Rector was greatly exercised, as were those of his parishioners, through a prevalent tradition that under the corner-stone of the foundation a treasure had been deposited at the time of building. This legend disturbed the Rector's mind, and as the work of demolition proceeded his anxiety increased. That a treasure was there he had no doubt. Its amount was a matter of deep thought and great hopes. There was also the question, What should be done with it when found? Conscience whispered, Hand it over to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or whoever the proper recipient of treasure-trove might be. On the other hand, he felt that it would be very useful in the poor-box. Possibly a thought would intrude itself that, if it consisted of coin in current circulation, it would be acceptable towards the expense of the autumn trip to the seaside. His mind distracted by the difficulty of coming to a decision, his Reverence went to bed, having strictly charged William Bass, the gardener, and James Stephens, the clerk, to be

at their posts by daybreak next morning, and see that the fateful stone was not removed until he was present. The eventful morning dawned; the Rector, the gardener, the clerk, were all present. The last stroke of the pick sounded; the casket—a tin box greatly resembling that in which sardines are packed—was exposed to view, seized, and opened—its contents just 2s. 6d. in copper coins of the reign of his late Majesty George III. In what manner his Reverence disposed of it remains a mystery.

Church and tower were then reflected on the placid surface of a moat, long since filled up, which doubtless in the old time provided fish for the abbot and monks on 'Fridays when they fasted.' For a monastery formerly existed in the immediate neighbourhood, the inscriptions on the slabs which covered their remains, long since illegible, worn down by the hobnailed boots of generations of worshipping Protestants. The moat, some fifty or sixty yards in length, when I was young, supplied the house with water for all purposes, drinking included. It was of a pale amber colour, derived from rotten weeds, and had a slight fishy taste. I remember censuring the water at a friend's house I visited, on the ground that 'it had no taste in it.'

'Old times are gone, old manners changed'—the latter I think not altogether for the better. Assuredly we were more courteous and less selfish. We rose, too, earlier, and went to bed earlier. Meal-times were not the same. We breakfasted at eight, dined at five, and on the rare occasion of a dinner-party, the guests, or the majority of them, stayed the night, perhaps two or three nights. Indeed, the state of the roads rendered a return at night impossible. Excepting one devious road that led to Slowton, the village was only accessible by clay lanes, in winter veritable sloughs of despond, impassable by any vehicle but a farm-cart. Pillions were not entirely extinct, and there runs a story of Squire Lincoln arriving at the Hall on horseback, an empty pillion behind his saddle whereon his wife ought to have been seated. She had, however, whilst the steed floundered through one of the deep sloughs in Long Lane, fallen off, and the Squire, being rather deaf and by no means careful of his wife, had never missed her. A light cart was despatched for her rescue, and she was brought in, somewhat the worse for wear, in time for dinner. Poor lady! that was not her only mishap. Next morning she wandered forth alone to inspect the Squire's bullocks, and one of them being somewhat obtrusive as she crossed a solitary plank doing duty for a bridge

over a ditch, she fell into it, and, being what the sailors call rather 'broad in the beam,' was unable to extricate herself. Damming up the stream, which trickled over her knees as she lay, she formed a small waterfall until discovered and rescued.

Dinners were more noted for plenty than elegance—a roast turkey at the top and boiled beef at the bottom, or a haunch of mutton at the top and a boiled turkey at the bottom, were the usual *pièces de résistance*. Six silver side dishes faced one another down the table, and guests were expected to carve their contents for the benefit of their neighbours. Sherry was frequently placed in pints along the table, and the butler only poured it out, when that excellent system, now, alas! extinct, of drinking wine with your neighbour, or on the part of the host with an honoured guest, was brought into play. A real blessing to a shy youth that custom was. After manœuvring successfully to get a place by some charming young lady—for excepting in the case of a county magnate we were not marshalled—the difficulty of opening conversation was got over by begging the honour, or pleasure, of a glass of wine with her. The ice was broken, and though we had little to say, we *talked*—what about I cannot conceive, for new books were very rare, and newspapers almost unknown. The table was lighted with wax candles, as, according to 'Rejected Addresses,' the theatres were. The imitator of Crabbe talks of

The long wax candles, with short cotton wicks.

I think they cost five shillings the pound. The cloth being removed, the pride of the butler's heart was disclosed in the shape of a mahogany table, polished till the lights were reflected in it, and ladies could get a furtive glance at their appearance, as it were, in a mirror.

After dinner, at most tables heavy drinking prevailed, and it was no unusual thing for a host to lock the door, and declare that until the large stock of port provided had been drunk out, no one should leave the room. This excessive drinking I have often thought was not so much a matter of taste as of tyrannous compulsion, and, like some other fashionable habits, persisted in from bravado, or a fear of being singular or accounted a milksop. Otherwise, why were penalties imposed for shirking the bottle, and why was it a high compliment to say of a man that you could 'drink in the dark with him'? In a lower class the same may

be observed. A verse in an old harvest-home drinking song implies this:—

Drink round, brave boys, drink round,
And see you do not spill,
For if you do, *you shall drink two*,
It is the master's will.

When the gentlemen came into the drawing-room they were sometimes hardly in a condition for ladies' society, but a round game was frequently resorted to—'Commerce' or 'Pope Joan,' for instance, were substitutes for conversation.

Surely the seasons themselves must have differed greatly from those of the present time. In the Christmas holidays we always, so far as I remember, skated every day during the greater portion of them, and the ground was almost always covered with deep snow. Then came an expedition to Whittlesea Mere, the chief of our annual treats. At that time the Mere was said to be twenty miles round. It was a strange piece of water, the recipient of the drainage of a vast extent of low land little above its level. The water was clear as crystal, and swarmed with fish; it was not more than two or at most three feet in depth, but the black semi-fluid substance which did duty for its bottom was of unknown depth. Though the fish thrived in it the water was perfectly undrinkable, almost poisonous. Islands of reeds and bulrushes were dotted about, and into them coots, wild-ducks, and moorhens scuttled, as the punt approached them. The manner of its approach was a mystery; under the influence of the silent sprit-pole it seemed to move by some voluntary self-contained power. Indeed, the art of punting over the Mere was attained only by practice from infancy, so liquid was the bottom you could not perceive when the flat bit of wood at the end of the sprit touched it; yet if to gain a better purchase the puntsman thrust it deeper, it was seized as in a vice almost impossible to extract. The boat advanced silently towards the islets, no splash, scarce a ripple, until touching the reeds it roused the inmates, who, rushing out on the opposite side, afforded a welcome shot to the sportsman. That lake has been long since drained, its surface fine corn-land; the Great Northern rattles over it, and instead of the ague-stricken reed-cutters and punt-fishers who dwelt on its margin, it is occupied by wealthy farmers—at least they were wealthy when wheat was 80s. to 100s. a quarter, and appear tolerably thriving even now.

I think that there was then more religion than at present. High Church and Low Church were unknown, at least unrecog-

nised. On Sundays the bells, put to the use they were originally intended for, called the scattered population to their devotions. Many farmers dwelt in lone houses one or two miles from the church, and as the last bell tolled they assembled in the churchyard exchanging hebdomadal greetings. Few of the men went into the church until his Reverence appeared; then the line opened on each side, and he walked between, receiving the bareheaded, kindly salutations of the parishioners, and gravely but cordially returning them. In church, inhabitants of the parish and those of the adjoining hamlet divided the open sittings; the one sat on the north, the other on the south side of the aisle. In both sections there was a division between the male and the female worshippers, the men sitting on one side, the women and children on the other. In the chancel were two pews, one for the Rector and his family, the other for their domestics. A third, in the body of the church, the old crest of the family painted in colours on the pillar above, was tenanted by the Squire and his family. Two or three of the principal farmers also had rickety pews in the church, and so long as they did not snore, the occupants might indulge in a nap if so disposed without scandal. Possibly the sermon, which I think was more of a moral than of a deeply religious character, and somewhat long, may have had a soporific effect, but no congregation could have followed the service in a more orthodox manner than the members of our own. The responses were made by the whole congregation (at least such as could read) in an audible voice, unaided by the four-and-twenty choristers who now monopolise the most beautiful parts of the service. The Psalms were not chanted, of course, but James Stephens, the clerk, stumbled through the alternative verses as best he could. James was 'no scholar,' and made a dreadful hash of the long words, but he never faltered, and got over them somehow. In his own estimation he was a man of education, and in a small way a poet. On one Guy Fawkes Day he gave out 'a hymn of our own composing,' which ran thus:

This is the day, the glorious day,
When Papists did conspire
To blow up the King and Parliament House
With gunpowd*ire*.

I think it was Stephens who announced the loss of Madam's dog (the clerk in those days always gave out notices) as 'a red and white spaniel with *four* eyes.' He had written *sore*.

In those days the congregation thought as much (perhaps

more) of the choir as of the church service, the performers being part and parcel of the congregation. The clerk was principal performer, and walked from his desk with no small pride to the gallery occupied by the singers at the proper time. I forget what instruments were used, but certainly two flutes, a violoncello, and a queer shaped instrument like the leg of a horse, the notes that proceeded from it being precisely similar to the trump which the drivers of motor-cars now use to announce their approach. The players played and the singers sang with a will, and there was no little emulation among them. 'Don't you think,' said my father one day, 'it would be better, James, if you sang a little less loud?' 'If I didn't sing out, sir,' was the reply, 'how would they know my singing from that of anyone else?'

The Sacrament was, according to modern ideas, too rarely administered, perhaps hardly more than on the days prescribed by the rubric, but it was, as it should be, a solemn ordinance, and invariably announced by the reading of the whole exhortation therefor provided. The collection was very small, mostly coppers, and after service my father, with myself in his hand, went forth to pay domiciliary visits to the poorest of his parishioners and divide the proceeds amongst them. Very welcome it was. The poor in those days were very poor indeed. Farmers, as farmers, had their good qualities, but were not the liberal open-handed race painted in novels. They had little education, being too grand to send their children to the Sunday school, and not in a position to send them to those of a higher class. The mottoes in their kitchens were generally of the class, 'Waste not, want not,' or 'A stitch in time saves nine.' They ruled the parish, and their great object was to keep down the rates. Wheat was 80s. to 100s. a quarter, bread quite 1s. a loaf, wheaten bread rarely tasted by the poor; in fact, how they lived is a puzzle to me. Eight to ten shillings a week, eked out by some trifling parish allowance, was all an adult man with a family had to live upon. The annual feasts at the Hall and the Parsonage were probably the only two occasions on which they got a really full meal, and those days were indeed red-letter days in their estimation. Our parish was strictly orthodox. There was but one Dissenter in it, a farmer known as 'Moat Rogers,' who walked three miles every Sunday to sit under his selected minister. On his farm alone the tithe was collected 'in kind,' and no little manoeuvring was practised in collecting it, the tenth cock or sheaf being made smaller than the others. William Bass, however, was not to be come over by

so simple a device ; he began his count at the second or third heap. It was a disagreeable but in those days a necessary mode of obtaining clerical dues. Mr. Rogers was of course violently opposed to both church and parson, but one day on returning home he found the latter praying by his dying wife. What passed afterwards I know not, but Rogers became an altered man, a regular attendant at church and a staunch friend of my father's.

My original destination was the Church, and so my father, a model parish priest, sought early to initiate me into one of the most important duties of a clergyman—visiting the sick. In accompanying him, I was greatly impressed not only with the patient endurance by the poor of the hardships they endured, but by their indifference to death, whether in their own persons or in that of others. 'When I'm gone, Susan, you'll look to the mending of the pigsty.' 'You go on dying, Sam, I'll see to that,' was the wife's response. 'When you get up to heaven,' said an old lady visiting her neighbour, then in a hopeless condition, 'you'll see our Jem ; tell him we are getting on pretty well now.' 'When I get up to heaven, Betty, do you think I shall have nothing better to do but to go *rampaging* about looking for your Jem ?' was the unsatisfactory reply.

In those days every family in the rank of gentry kept a carriage and pair of horses. No doubt the steeds were utilised for more humble duties than drawing the chariot, and the coachman officiated as gardener also, but a 'one-horse shay,' except in the shape of a dog-cart, was unknown. In like manner, a footman was considered necessary. Now a parlourmaid and a brougham, more sensibly, occupy their place.

If godliness was more cultivated in those days, its younger sister, cleanliness, was sadly neglected. Baths were rare, tubbing not invented, the best bedroom was considered sufficiently furnished if it contained a ewer and basin ; ablutions were practically confined to the face and hands. Schoolboys had their feet washed in a tub of bran and hot water by the housemaids, half yearly, before they went home for their holidays. There were only two kinds of soap in use, mottled and yellow. Theodore Hook describes the widow Bragg, on her wedding tour at Brighton, remarking to her husband, 'I shall have a "wesh" to-day, Jim ; its fifteen—sixteen—years since I had a "wesh."' At a preparatory school where, as a small boy, I was starved for two or three years, half-a-dozen basins were provided for sixty or seventy boys, the rest were

accommodated with a bit of yellow soap or the top of the pump. Yet there were many gentlemen's sons at that school.

As time went on, I became the happy possessor of a gun. It was an ancient implement, formerly the property of my grandfather, and intended by fate for my extinction. Once when dragging it through a hedge with the muzzle in close proximity to my head it missed fire; once it burst at the muzzle. I had it cut down, and then it burst at the breech, after which it was relegated to the rubbish heap. Meanwhile it was my constant companion when I took my walks abroad. On one occasion, a bitter cold morning in December, the snow lying thick on the ground, I started forth, the old flint and steel on my shoulder, the dogs at my heels, in search of any living thing bigger than a sparrow I might come across. In those halcyon days game-preserving was unknown, and I shot over the country at my own sweet will; no keeper interfered with me, and the only notice a farmer took of my trespass was to offer me a pork-pie and a glass of ale. As I crossed the Slowton Road I espied, huddled together in the snow, a covey of partridges some thirty yards distant. In a moment the old gun was laid over the rail of the bridge I was crossing, and aiming at the cluster of birds, I fired. To my intense delight one victim, in the shape of an old cock partridge, lay struggling in the snow, shot through the head. To seize and dispose of him in my capacious pocket was the work of a moment, and then, as the shades of the short sunless day were descending, I essayed to return. But I had wandered far out of my beat, and just then a pitiless cold rain began to fall. A small village was close at hand, and to it I repaired for shelter. The only public-house, the 'Red Lion,' received me hospitably, as I entered in company with two labourers returning from work. Calling, as they both did, for a pint of beer, we sat down amicably by the fire, and soon got into conversation. An argument apparently of intense importance to them soon sprang up, and I had only to listen to their monotonous conversation on the subject, assertion and counter-assertion being repeated over and over again in the same dictatorial tone and the same words. I should say that the dogs which lay at my feet had started it.

'Jan, you mind the Squire's old dog "Rap"? What a wonderful dog he was, surely!'

'I do; his feyther was a setter-dog, his mother a pointer-bitch.'

'No, Jan, you're wrong. His feyther was a pointer-dog and his mother a setter-bitch.'

'Well, I know as his feyther was a setter-dog, and his mother a pointer-bitch.'

Both speakers repeated their assertions in the same words precisely. A third yokel entered, and the point was at once referred to him.

'Willum, you knew the Squire's old dog "Rap"? His feyther was a pointer-dog and his mother a setter-bitch! Jan, here, says as how his feyther was a setter-dog and his mother a pointer-bitch.'

Which side Willum took I do not remember, but a fourth labourer who entered was enlisted in the argument. He put a new light on it entirely.

'I knowed "Rap" well; he was son to "Nestor," Muster Swain's dog —'

'Dog! why, Tummas, "Nestor" was a *bitch*—I knowed her! "Nestor"'s all the same as "Hester," though some spells it that way. My wife's sister's name is Hester. Nobody never knowed a *man* named "Nestor." I'll ask the young Squire here. Squire, did you ever know a *man* named "Nestor"?'

I confessed that I did not. The admission was greeted as a point scored on one side or the other, I know not which, and, as the storm had abated, and the argument, which was carried on word for word as it began, tired not, like the frog when his wooing was interrupted, I 'took up my hat, and wished them good-night.'

Men were not turned out of a public at ten o'clock in those days, and I doubt not that the argument was carried, with little change of words, into the small hours.

The above is a faithful record of a conversation carried on by men of the labouring class, not one of whom, probably, could either read or write. I would compare it with that of the members of a club, little, if at all, above them, as reported in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. I allude to the dialogue carried on between Mr. Miggs, the president, the Lorryman, and the white-faced member from the country. They are witty and humorous in the extreme—Mr. Miggs especially, a sort of political 'Bully Bottom,' his arguments evidently inspired by a perusal of the *Daily News*. His interlocutors, too, read their daily papers. My friends, probably, were not aware that such a thing as a daily paper existed.

GEORGE ROOPER.

Ballade of Christmas-boxes.

THEY gather like the birds of prey,
That scent the carnage in the air ;
While yet the wintry morn is grey,
The foremost of the band appear ;
And all day long the quiet square
Re-echoes with their single knocks.
They fill my troubled heart with care,
For all demand a Christmas-box.

Here is the milkman ; here are they,
(A dingy but facetious pair)
Who say they cart the dust away.

Here comes the sweep, and in his rear
The fiend who brings her skill to bear
On spoiling shirts and losing socks ;
The butcher, baker—all are here,
And all demand a Christmas-box.

I've all my monthly bills to pay ;
I've not a single cent to spare ;
I walk to business all the way
To save an eighteenpenny fare ;
I've scarce a decent coat to wear ;
My daughters clamour for new frocks ;
The coal cellar is almost bare ;
Yet all demand a Christmas-box.

ENVOI.

Fortune, or Fate, or whosoe'er
Dost rule the rise and fall of Stocks,
The game so far is scarcely fair—
I too demand a Christmas-box.

F. RITCHIE.

Mushroom Ketchup.

IT was about seven o'clock on a fifth of November evening, and a smell of burning brushwood, mingled with gunpowder, pervaded the village street. A thin blue smoke wreathed itself above the hollow in which the village stood: it was all that remained of a bonfire, a bonfire of small pretensions, but one that a few boys had talked about for weeks previously and had been so anxious to see blaze that they had lighted it before dusk, and as it had long ago become nothing but a heap of ashes they had now betaken themselves to the task of letting off a few feeble fireworks, to the annoyance of most of the old people in the street.

Round the window of the one shop the village possessed stood some half-a-dozen young scamps, bemoaning the failure of their pecuniary supplies and flattening their faces against the glass as they admired and longed for the few fireworks placed in such tempting prominence.

'Lor'! I'd like a bundle o' them there long uns with th' wax ends, or one o' them thick yaller uns with th' blue tops. Kippen, what ha' yer got left? Tree ha'pence, ha' yer! gude on yer, bor; dew yer ha' one o' them Catherine wheels—they be right proper.'

'Na,' put in a second speaker, 'dew yer ha' one o' them there long crackers as goes off forty times, and let's go and terrify owd Mother Hewitt.'

The excitement increased as each boy in turn suggested how to lay out the money to the best and most brilliant advantage.

A cart drew up in front of the shop; the steaming condition of the horse showing it had come a long distance.

'Can I hold yer hoss, sir?' cried most of the boys at once. 'I arst fust, sir.' 'That he didn't; he be a liar, sir,' was shouted in chorus.

'Oh! get out o' th' way tergether, dew,' said the man. 'I ain't agoin' ter stop; I'm only goin' ter leave my samples inside and then I'm goin' ter take out, so I don't want none o' yer help.'

There was a sudden silence, a silence of disappointment, for the boys had anticipated another copper to expend in pyrotechnic display.

Tinkle, tinkle, went the shop bell as the man opened the door. 'Gude even', Miss Julia. I'll just lay these here pattern-books on th' counter if yer don't mind, cos I want ter take my mare out and give her a feed o' corn and have a cup o' tea over at th' Swan, and afterwards I'll come in and take yer orders.'

'Ah! all right, Mr. Forbes,' said the girl addressed. 'Stand 'em there; no one shall interfere on 'em. Thank ye, I'm pretty well, but mother, she be kinder middlin'.'

'Well! yer looken' real bonnika and more lovely than ever, dang me if yer ain't!' and Mr. Forbes cast an admiring glance in the girl's direction.

'S-sh, Charlie; don't ye prate on like that. Mother 'll hear yer, and then there'll be no end o' a sisserara. Dew yer go and get yer tea, and don't talk like a duzzy fule.'

The young man blew a kiss across the counter, and tinkle, tinkle, went the bell again as he closed the door behind him.

Mrs. Grimes kept one of those little general shops still to be found in many of the remoter villages of Norfolk. On a board over the door was written 'Maria Grimes, Licensed Dealer in Tobacco,' but from that it must not be concluded that tobacco was the only thing Maria Grimes sold: far from it, on looking round, the difficulty was to discover what Maria Grimes did not sell. Hanging from the low ceiling were bunches of hob-nailed boots of all sizes, tin pails, coils of linen-line, lanterns and tallow candles, which brushed the hats of the customers as they entered the shop. Piled high on the counter were tins of lobster, various brands of salmon, American cheeses, pans of lard, pieces of bacon, loaves of bread, and tins of biscuits. The shelves at the back of the counter were packed tight to the ceiling with rolls of red flannel, prints, broadcloth, and suits of boys' clothes, and in front of these were displayed to advantage girls' hats, trimmed with bright feathers, cheap flowers, and ribbons. In the window were rows of glass bottles, containing sweets of many kinds (mainly of the sticky order), pots of jam, a few cheap toys, the box containing the fireworks, lamps, a bag of marbles, and a few withered apples, the whole brightened by a coloured advertisement of Someone's Cotton and Someone's Turret Tea. On the floor stood rows of black cooking utensils, coal scuttles and spades, stones for sharpening scythes, looking-glasses, and various odds and ends warranted

to bark your shins as you moved about on a tour of inspection. Not that you could move far, for the place was so well stocked, so crowded, that it was difficult to turn round without knocking over something or other.

Maria Grimes was a wizened-up old lady, with a face furrowed and lined. She wore a red and black check shawl over her shoulders, and on her head an indescribable cross between a cap and a poke bonnet, made of a black material. What other garments she wore no one could say with certainty, for her sphere of action lay mainly behind the counter, and being a short woman her head and shoulders only were visible. Her age must have been between sixty and seventy, and as Julia, her daughter, was barely nineteen, Mrs. Grimes, it must be concluded, had had her love affairs late in life. In every respect Julia was her mother's opposite: plump, tall, with blue eyes, bright fair hair, and red lips and cheeks, she was a decidedly pretty girl.

Mrs. Grimes served in the shop on Saturday nights and when there were more customers than Julia could attend to, but most of her time was spent in the little room behind the shop, to enter which you had to ascend two steps and pass through a door, into which a pane of glass had been inserted. This pane was covered on the inside with a red twill curtain which Mrs. Grimes could lift at will to observe Julia and her customers.

The shop had a perfume all its own, a blend of cheese and boots, tallow candles and paraffin oil. Sometimes the candles most violently assaulted your nasal organ; at other times the boots seemed to have it all their own way; but there is no doubt that everything in turn did its very best to attract public notice to itself, as if to say, 'Buy me; I am longing to get out of this.'

Trade was very brisk this November evening, and Julia moved quickly up and down the counter, weighing, sorting, and measuring, making neat parcels of the most heterogeneous contents.

'Now, Mrs. Skipper, I'll 'tend ter yer. With them there boys amaken' all that din and clutter inter street, fare ter me keepen' shop be right down perpiexen' th' fifth o' November. What dew ye want?'

'A pound o' crushed sugar, please, Miss Julia,' said the middle-aged woman, who had taken the only chair by the counter. 'I'll ha' tew or tree o' them pork chops. Oh! fresh in terday; that be proper. Tew ouncen o' tea; dew ye put a pinch o' green inter it—that dew seem ter draw th' flavour out o' t' other, that dew. Then I want six o' them farden candles—'

'They be tree a penny now,' said Mrs. Grimes, appearing suddenly on the scene.

'Lor! narthen' never dew come down,' moaned Mrs. Skipper. 'That dew seem shameful how dear things dew be agetten' for us poor folk.'

'All I know is that don't dew me any gude,' said Mrs. Grimes. 'I wish 't did; that make it wus for us shopkeepers.'

'Then I want tew loaf o' bread and a yard and a half o' that there sarsnet ribbon, red, same as I had when I comed in a Tuesday. I think that'll be all ter-night, Mrs. Grimes. Yer'll order me half a stun o' best whites when th' miller call. Thank ye kindly.'

Mrs. Skipper was just rising to go when the bell rang again and another lady—a tall, raw-boned woman, whose appearance was spoilt by a large wart over her left eye—entered the shop. Mrs. Skipper sat down again.

'What! a-doin' yer shoppen', Mrs. Skipper?' remarked the newcomer. 'Yer fare ter ha' a great owd basketful; but there, as I say ter my gude man, no one know 'cept those who ha' ter provide for a family the amount o' all maunder o' things what's wanted.'

'Ah! yer right, bor,' replied Mrs. Skipper; 'and ter hear my man talk when he hain't got th' wittles he kinder 'proves on, one 'ud think he give me an Inder o' money ter shop with.'

Mrs. Cook interjected that she allowed her man no fancies of any sort, he just had to eat the 'wittles' set before him. 'I'll ha' a tin o' that there condensed milk, Mrs. Grimes.'

'Dew yer like that there kind, Mrs. Cook?' asked Mrs. Grimes, as she wrapped the tin in paper.

'Well, there fare ter be a gude tidy drop o' substance in it. I ha' just weaned my youngest, and he fare ter take kindly ter it.'

A small boy had entered the shop and was touching and playing with everything within his reach. Mrs. Grimes, with a 'Cuse me, Mrs. Cook, I'll 'tend ter this here boy afore I finish yer orders; I can't abide boys ajifling in my shop,' turned her attention to the newcomer.

'Now then, Harry Platten, what dew ye want?'

'Tree ha'purth o' gunpowder, please, mum.'

'Goodness gracious alive! What next, pray? Ter ha' th' imperence ter come and arst for gunpowder at this time o' night! Hain't I told ye afore I 'ont sell gunpowder arter dark? Here! ha' one o' them bundles o' starlights.'

‘Dew they bang, mum?’

‘Dew they bang? How should I know? Buy ‘em, and then yer’ll be able ter find out. Plague th’ lad! make up yer mind, and dew keep yer hands off things.’ Harry expressed a desire for ‘tree ha’purch o’ Chinee crackers.’ ‘All right; here yer be. I’ll be thankful when all these here mucky things be cleared out. Never agen dew I keep fireworks. That wor Miss Julia’s notion, that wor. What with the licence ter sell ‘em, and th’ thought o’ bein’ blowed up, and the shop full o’ boys all day long, and half th’ skule astaren’ inter winder and agarmen’ th’ glass up with their fingers, and th’ everlastin’ bangin’ inter street, that don’t repay yer nohow. There, off yer go, Harry; and don’t go asetten’ off nigh my shop. I don’t want ter be barnt in my bed.’

‘Yes, mum; thank ye, mum; gude night, mum’; and Harry opened the door. ‘Gude night tergether. Gude night, Mrs. Dumplin’-on-th’-eye Cook!’

The lady with the wart made a dash at the boy with her umbrella, but he had already put a safe distance between himself and the object of his ridicule. ‘There! ter be sure,’ she exclaimed. ‘I never did! Whatever are we acomen’ tew? These boys are gotten right outstreperous. Fare ter me no one can dew narthen’ with their childer nowadays. This comes o’ forced edication, board skules, and all maunder o’ such-like. And what they don’t know they larns off these here yachters as come about inter summertime.’

‘Yes, it be dreadful ter hear ‘em. But, there! yer should keep a shop,’ sympathised Mrs. Grimes. ‘Yer’d hear summat then. It’s right down disgraceful, as I told th’ head teacher t’other day when she wor praten’ on about th’ wonnerful grant th’ skule ha’ arnt. I say, “What about th’ young warmin’s manners?” Ah! that nonplussed her, that did. Well, gude night, Mrs. Cook, if yer must be agoin’.’ And as the shop was now empty Mrs. Grimes retired to the back room to lay the supper, so as to be ready to help her daughter when the traveller returned.

Soon the bell sounded again, and in walked Mr. Forbes. He looked agitated as he began to undo his bundle of goods and broke out:

‘Look ye here, Julia, I’m sick o’ this beaten’ about th’ bush. I ha’ made up my mind, I ha’, and I’m agoin’ in ter talk straight ter th’ owd lady. Why shouldn’t we keep company, if we ha’ a mind ter? What ha’ th’ owd lady got agen it I wants ter know.

I ha' been traveller for Rankin's tew year, and I know a lot about business, I dew. Why, with a bit o' push and advertisement, I could double yer takens in no time. What yer want ter dew is ter lay yerself out for these here yachters. Look at th' trade they do with 'em at Wroxham. Why, if th' owd 'oman would let us get married, we'd put a big winder inter this here shop and dew a rum 'un. Why not ha' a board onter quay pointen' out the way up here, with "Yachten' parties perwided for" on it? Can I go in and arst th' owd lady, Julia?'

'Tain't no use,' and Julia shook her head mournfully. 'Mother, she 'on't hear o' me getten' married. She wor sayen' only yesterday she hated th' sight o' a man dangen' about th' house, and she never did fare ter think much o' ye. Yer'll only be upsetten' everything and amaken' o' things more onpleasant than they be now, and p'raps she'll say how she 'ont ha' yer call agen.'

This was a possibility that had not suggested itself to the young man's mind.

'Howsomedever, dew yer dew what yer think proper,' went on the girl. 'Yer can go and see her if yer ha' the mind ter, but if that don't tarn out right don't ye say that be my fault.'

'All right, Julia. They say narthen' venture narthen' win; I ha' a mind ter go, and I be agoen'; and the young man lifted the flap of the counter and walked round to the door, on which he rapped. 'Come in,' was the answer; and, with already oozing courage, Mr. Forbes entered and wished Mrs. Grimes 'Gude even'.'

'Oh, it be yer, be it? Well, I never! I'll come inter shop, Mr. Forbes; I don't dew business in my keepen' room.'

This was a bad start, and the young man felt himself at a disadvantage. Twisting and twirling his hat in his hand, he, much to the old lady's astonishment, closed the door behind him and began in faltering tones:

'Taint exactly business as I wanter see yer about, Mrs. Grimes—er—er—I should—er—ha' kept inter shop—er—and not ha' taken th' liberty ter come in here. But it wor—it wor—er—another matters I wanter ha' a say with ye about.'

'Lawk a mussy me! what dew th' man want?' exclaimed Mrs. Grimes. 'Dew get it out; don't stand huckerin' there. I ain't agoen' ter lend yer money, if that's what yer arter, so now yer know.'

'Oh, no, thank ye, Mrs. Grimes, I don't want yer ter lend me no money. wor about ter arst yer—arst yer—if yer'd make no

objections ter my keeping company along o' yer daughter, Julia. I'm wery took with th' gal, and we wanter get wed, we dew.'

'Well, there!' screamed Mrs. Grimes, 'what fancies! Well, I never! A young jackanapes like ye astandin' there atellen' me a lot o' rubbage! What next? I should ha' thought as how yer'd ha' put me down ter have more sense than ter listen ter such notions. Here, Julia be only nineteen year come Easter; 'taint likely she know her own mind, and I tell yer I ain't going ter let her start havin' a young man atrapezin' on her out a Sundays when she orter be in church, or a haven' a letter from a fule of a sweetheart, tarnen' her head and taken' her mind off her duties. 'Taint so likely. And supposen' I wor duddy fule enow ter let yer get married—not as how I 'tend ter, so mind yer that—how dew ye think o' liven', I should like ter know? A pretty kind o' husband yer'd make, out on yer rounds and asleepen' in public-housen from Monday morning ter Saturday night. A proper kind o' husband for a gal not yet twenty!'

As Mrs. Grimes was at last obliged to pause for breath, Forbes meekly ventured to explain that if he got married he thought of giving up travelling and was prepared to assist his mother-in-law in the management of the shop. So dumbfounded was the old lady at this notion that in the silence she maintained the young man had an opportunity of giving his opinion of the desirability of enlarging the business as well as the shop-window. Mrs. Grimes's wrath knew no bounds.

'I like yer imperence, that I dew,' she broke in. Then in tones of biting irony she added, 'Yer be agoin ter teach me ter keep shop; yer be most considerate and obliging, I must say. Forty year and more ha' I kept th' shop and how I ha' done it without th' help o' such as yer th' Lord in Heaven only know. Enlargen' th' winder, and apullen' th' house about my ears, and aspenden' o' my money—!' words failed her.

Forbes's information that he had fifty pounds put by which he thought would pay for the alterations quite failed of the desired effect.

'I 'on't ha' yer alterations, no, nor yer fifty pound; and as for praten' on about th' yachters, why I be right glad when th' summer be gone, I be. Th' yachters!' she added in tones of derision, 'what gude dew ye ever get out o' them! I know 'em; hain't I time arter time this summer started five or six young sparks off on their business? There they be, asitten' on th' counter, ateasen' o' Julia, and keepen' honest folk out o' th' shop,

till I hit on th' plan o' puttin' a tray o' them tarts on th' counter ter 'tract th' owd waps. They kept 'em pretty lively; some on 'em got stung pretty tid'ly, tew; that kept 'em from stoppen' and talken' and interrupten' my gal in her duties. Yer can keep yer yachters—I don't hold with 'em; and look ye here, Mr. Forbes, if I ha' any more o' this I'll write ter Rankin's and say they can either not ha' yer call agen', or put another traveller on th' round. So I wish ye a wery gude even' and thank ye for narthen'. No, we don't want narthen' ternight, so yer can take yer parcels along with yer.'

Mrs. Grimes drove the discomfited traveller before her to the door, effectually frustrating his hopes of a few last words with the unhappy Julia.

For a day or two after the young man's dismissal the girl's relations to her mother were somewhat strained, for the old lady lost no opportunity of airing her sentiments as to the folly o' young mawthers acrazen' their heads about getten' wed, instead o' 'tending ter business. Forbes she insisted on styling 'th' young jackanapes,' and in violent terms she denounced 'th' imperence o' th' man acomen' inter my room without so much as a "by yer leave," and arsten' for my daughter like as though she wor a bar o' motley soap. I'll ha' no more on it. I'll 'tend ter travellers myself. Yer not ter be trusted, that's a sure moral,' she informed her daughter so often that Julia became impressed with the heinousness of her conduct and went about her work with so settled an air of melancholy that her altered appearance evoked much comment in the village.

'I wonder what ail th' mawther,' Mrs. Skipper remarked to her neighbour, Mrs. Cook, as they swept their respective doorsteps. 'She seem right tetchy, she dew, and fare ter look kinder sheeped about summat.'

'Yes,' replied Mrs. Cook, 'I went inter shop t' morning ter get a bit o' lard and she fared kinder afeard ter talk, and Julia wor allus fit for a bit of a mardle. I wonder what ha' come ter th' gal. She hain't got no constitution, I know, and Mrs. Grimes she dew put upon her so. There she be, all day long, shut up in th' shop, and never get out 'cept Sundays, and then only 'lowed as far as th' church and back agen.'

So passed a week of deep depression, for Julia was ever picturing in her mind's eye her lover's hopeless look of despair as he was swept from the shop by the torrent of her mother's invective, and all the world looked very black. She was staring aim-

lessly out of the window one afternoon between the tins of corned beef and bottles of pickles when she noticed a stranger stop in front of the shop, look up at the name on the board, and then, after a little hesitation, open the door and come in. The man was flashily dressed in a somewhat shiny black coat, blue trousers, and a flaring red tie, and he wore a bright-coloured dahlia in his button-hole. He greeted Julia with a profound bow, which expressed admiration of so much beauty behind a counter.

‘Good afternoon, miss; most seasonable weather for th’ time o’ year, miss. I believe I am right in thinking this is Mrs. Grimes’s. Possibly I’m speakin’ to Miss Grimes,’ Julia bowed assent. ‘I came to see if I could procure hany mushroom ketchup.’

Julia believed there was some somewhere, but after a fruitless search was obliged to call her mother, who produced a bottle from a remote corner of the shop.

‘There ain’t much call for these here sauces; folk fare ter clear up their wittles without wanten’ of a relish,’ said Mrs. Grimes, as she wrapped the bottle in paper and handed it across the counter. ‘Tew shillen’, if yer please.’

The young man made complimentary remarks on the healthiness of the neighbourhood in such eloquent language that Julia decided he must be a ‘London gent.’ ‘But I wants several dozen o’ this ’ere stuff,’ he added, as he laid a florin on the counter.

‘Why, what in th’ name o’ wonder dew yer want with sev’ral dozens?’ cried Mrs. Grimes.

‘Well it’s like this, missus. My master, Mr. Smithers—his wally, mum’—and the young man bowed as he introduced himself into the story. ‘My master ’as taken the shooten’ at the ’all and is staying at the Ferry Hinn. ‘E’s one of them London swells, and fond o’ ’is bottle of champagne. Well! this ’ere stuff is pertikelar good when ’e’s got a mouth on in the mornin’. ‘E passed through ’ere last summer and bought a bottle of this ketchup of yours, and the comfort it has been to the pore gentleman I can’t tell you. So says ’e to me, “Do you go and git three dozen from where the other came from,” and I came off to you straightaway.’

‘Tree dozen, goodness me! he must be main fond on it, ter be sure. I wish I had some more, but that be all I ha’ got. Maybe, Julia, as how th’ chaps as make it may call round this way afore long, and then, sir, I’ll remember o’ ye.’

'Well, just send it down to the Ferry—"Mr. Smithers, Ferry Hinn"—of course we shouldn't mind paying a little extra for your trouble,' said the stranger, with extreme affability.

'Th' man as make it live out Barton way; fare ter me he be sure ter call afore long—he allus call oncet in th' season, don't he, Julia?'

'Well! think of us; we shall be 'ere, on and off, the whole winter through. 'Tis a queer little 'ole this place, mum—not much push about it, so to speak; it makes it quite pleasant to 'ave a chat with real business people like yerselves; you see I'm used to business people in London, and I seem kind of at home with 'em when I meets 'em. Good day.'

'That,' said Mrs. Grimes pointedly, as the door closed behind the stranger, 'is what I call a wery perlite young man. He know a business woman when he see her, though she don't waste no money on largen' th' winder or advertizen' th' goods. If yer see them ketchup people pass down th' street dew yer run out and stop 'em, Julia.'

By a fortunate chance who should walk into the shop the next morning but a man wearing a white apron and carrying a big basket on his arm.

'Dew you want any ketchup, home made?' he inquired, as he set down the basket on the counter.

'Well, there now,' said Julia, 'that dew be a coincident, ter be sure! Here, mother, here be th' wery thing we wants.' Mrs. Grimes bustled into the shop.

'Ter think on it now, just inter wery nick o' time, as one might say. But yer baint th' man from Barton?' said the old lady, as she critically examined the new-comer.

'I come from th' City, but it be the Barton recete right enough. Mushrooms were that plentiful t' year there be many a man a-gone inter th' ketchup-trade.'

'Well, I want tree dozen,' said Mrs. Grimes, beaming at the magnitude of her order.

'Can't dew it, mum, nigh sold out; can let yer have tew dozen, that's all I ha' got onter cart, but I'll be round agen shortly and can bring yer another dozen.'

'And what be yer asken' for th' tew dozen. Twenty-four shillen'? that be tew much. I'll give yer a pound.'

After much haggling twenty-two shillings was agreed on as a price, and Mrs. Grimes informed the man she wanted the ketchup for a customer up at the Ferry.

'Can I drive it up there for yer? I'm goin' round that way.'

'No, thank ye. I'll give a boy tuppence ter crowd it up in a barrer. Don't ye forget ter bring t' other when yer next come this way.'

'Why didn't yer let him take it ter th' Ferry—'t would ha' saved tuppence,' Julia asked as she watched the cart disappear down the village street.

'Well, there, Julia, I did think yer'd more o' a head for business! I wants my profit, in course. I shall send up a bill for six and twenty shillen'; fare ter me we shall make a tidy sum over this here ketchup afore we ha' done.'

The same afternoon the bottles were carefully packed into a wheelbarrow and a boy found to wheel it to the Ferry. Within the course of an hour or so he returned with a message from the landlord that no one of the name of Smithers was staying at the inn. 'And as-I had ter crowd it back agen will yer, please, give me another copper, mum?' said the boy, mindful of his own interests.

Mrs. Grimes gazed at her daughter in open-mouthed astonishment. 'Not known, and th' young man said they wor there on and off th' whole winter! 'Clare ter Gawd, I see through it now—'twor a trick ter defraud us. Them there chaps belonged to one another, and they ha' done us out o' tew and twenty shillen.'

'Seems like it,' said Julia. 'Seems ter me as though this wery perlite young man wor a bit tew business-like in his talk, leastways for tew women-folk with no man ter advise 'em.'

'I'll catch th' wagabonds yet,' cried Mrs. Grimes, allowing Julia's sarcasm to pass unproved. 'I'll go and see if th' perliceman be at home,' and she hurried out of the shop and up the street.

It was a somewhat chastened woman who received Mr. Forbes on his next round. As she herself remarked, she was 'fairly beat out' over the whole business. Glad of a fresh sympathiser she poured the story of her troubles into the young man's ears, who said:

'Maybe as how I can help ye in th' matter, Mrs. Grimes.'

'Yer, how can yer help me I'd like ter know?'

'Well, mum, yer see it's like this. 'Taint likely as them there scoundrels 'll be content with havin' tricked one owd lady. I drive through a lot o' parishes in th' week and, maybe, I'll find 'em tryen' their game on in some other willage. If yer gives me a description o' them, and I happen ter drop on 'em, 't would be easy matters ter run 'em in, that's all.'

'Well, there, Mr. Forbes, fare ter me there be a lot in what yer say, and I'd be wery obliged ter ye if yer could. It be right wexen' ter look at all that there sauce'—and the old lady pointed to a row of black bottles disposed on a shelf at the back of the shop.

'Well! I'll dew my best, Mrs. Grimes, and keep a sharp look-out,' and saying this Mr. Forbes bade mother and daughter good-bye.

'Fare ter me,' remarked the old woman, as the traveller closed the door behind him—'fare ter me that young chap ha' got his head screwed on th' right way. Shouldn't wonder if he hain't got a head for business. I'll think a deal more o' him if he bring them blackguards ter justice.' But Julia held her peace.

Some weeks passed ere Mr. Forbes pulled up at the shop and ran in with the news that the ketchup men were caught.

'I thought as how I might ha' th' luck ter drop on th' beauties, Mrs. Grimes, and I ha' made inquiries and ha' kept my eyes open ever since ye told me about 'em. I began ter be afeard they'd gone clean away, but yesterday I run right up agen them in a willage just outer Norwich, and they wor trying on th' same game. I gets hold o' a perliceman and gives 'em in charge. I hears as tew or tree people are a-goin' ter follow th' law onter 'em, so yer needn't take th' trouble o' goin' ter Norwich if yer hain't a mind ter. They'll get tree months for th' job, I expect.'

Mrs. Grimes could not conceal her satisfaction. 'I be right proud on yer, Mr. Forbes, I be; seem ter me yer knows a bit about business arter all. Just yer step inter my room—I want ter ha' a few words along o' yer. Well,' went on the old lady, when the door was shut on Julia's curious ears, 'ha' yer th' same mind about my gal, Mr. Forbes? Cos I ha' right taken ter yer. I be gotten old and don't fare ter care ter look arter th' business as I used ter dew, and Julia she be young. Why, only this summer some o' them young sparks comed off a yacht and bought a lot o' things, and ordered a lot more, and said they'd call for 'em on their way back from Acle and pay for 'em all tergether, and we never see'd a glint o' them no more. And then comed this here ketchup job—fare ter me things are all goin' contrary-like! So if yer be in th' same mind as regards Julia 't won't be me as 'll stand in yer way no longer, and yer can come and help us keep shop. Seeing as th' world is full o' wagabonds and thieves, maybe we'll find a man about th' premises waller'ble!'

Had you been walking through the village the next summer your attention would at once have been drawn to a shop all splendid in fresh paint, with a large new window set out like a Norwich grocer's. Above the window, on a red board with gold letters, was written 'Forbes & Co. Yachting parties specially provided for'; and within, behind a marble topped counter, Mr. Forbes, in a clean white apron, helped his smiling wife to serve the many customers. Everything connected with the shop was, as the little calendar slipped inside your parcel informed you, up to date, and of one commodity you could be sure of finding a plentiful supply, and that was Mushroom Ketchup.

CHAS. FIELDING MARSH.

Concerning Hare-hunting.

THAT hare-hunting, one of the most ancient of all forms of sport, is still wonderfully popular in these islands is a fact which the most casual inquiry into the subject will make at once apparent. There was a time, especially in the hey-day of fox-hunting, during the earlier half of the last century, when this branch of the chase suffered some eclipse; and when the Hares and Rabbits Bill was introduced and made law not a few prophesied that hare-hunting would shortly become extinct. Yet a glance at the list of packs hunting hare in the United Kingdom, during the present season of 1902-3, will amply convince even the most sceptical that the chase of the hare is at this moment not only far removed from decadence, but pursuing a most vigorous and healthy existence. There are some indications even that hare-hunting may in certain districts outlive the pursuit of the fox. At the present moment there are hunting hare, in Great Britain and Ireland, no fewer than 177 packs of hounds. Of these ninety-nine packs of harriers are maintained in England, twenty-four in Ireland, and three in Scotland. Beagle packs in the United Kingdom—chiefly in England—number forty-nine, while two packs of basset hounds bring up the grand total to 177. When it is remembered that in the year 1879 no more than 160 packs of harriers and beagles were to be found hunting in Great Britain, it may be conceded that hare-hunting has suffered no permanent decline in the last twenty years, in spite of the Ground Game Act, agricultural depression, and other hindrances.

There seem to me to be two great reasons why hare-hunting has maintained and even augmented its ancient vogue. The first of these is that it is popular among the farmers. Many a sport-loving yeoman and tenant farmer has been compelled reluctantly to give up fox-hunting for the plain reason that he cannot afford it. Many a man whose father, in the good days of agriculture, kept a hunter or two and went out regularly twice or thrice a

week, now watches fox-hounds from afar off; he gives them the run of his land, and takes down wire-fencing, but for himself he can afford fox-hunting no longer, and with a sigh he leaves the sport to other and richer, but assuredly not to worthier, folk. But with harriers it is different. The farmer, riding out on his rough nag or pony, which would be useless for fox-hunting, can from the very nature of the chase, the ringing tactics of the hare, see a good deal of the sport, and he goes home refreshed and heartened. It costs him nothing, fields rule small, little damage is done to his fences and crops, and more often than not he gets a good hare for his dinner. As for the beagle packs they are always welcome. They are hunted on foot, no damage whatever is done to the farmer's property, and again, whenever a hare is killed that was found upon his land, that hare, by the custom and courtesy of hare-hunting, goes to the occupier.

Again, hare-hunting is a much less costly business than that of maintaining a pack of fox-hounds. You can run a pack of mounted harriers, doing the thing modestly but in adequate style, and hunting two days a week, for from 250*l.* to 300*l.* per annum. I am well aware that some of the first-rate packs, hunting three days a week, and with everything almost as well found and well done—on a reduced scale—as a pack of fox-hounds, cost to maintain as much as 600*l.* or 700*l.* a year, occasionally even more. But a modest pack of sixteen or twenty couple of harriers can be maintained at but trifling expense, especially if—as is so often the case—the master hunts his hounds himself. I am well acquainted with a pack of foot-harriers in the South of England which cost for entire maintenance no more than 125*l.* per annum. These are a fine old-fashioned pack of pure harriers and show excellent sport, killing as many as from sixty to seventy hares during the season. The late Earl of Suffolk and Berkshire stated, in the *Encyclopædia of Sport*, that the maintenance of fifteen and a-half couple of harriers cost him, some ten or twelve years ago, no more than 114*l.* 10*s.* per annum. This was running the thing rather fine; the keep of the huntsman's horse, for instance, was only debited to the pack during the hunting season—twenty-one weeks, at 1*l.* 1*s.* per week; and the whipper-in's wages were allocated at but 9*s.* per week. Still it shows that harriers can be worked very cheaply. Lord Suffolk remarks of his little pack, 'Things were roughly, perhaps very roughly done, but one had capital fun for all that.' A pack of foot-beagles can be kept going for 70*l.* or 80*l.* a year, the master of course hunting and managing

his hounds, and keeping a smart lad as whip and kennel huntsman.

One of the great pleasures of hunting with hare is that you may see so much more of the pure science of the sport and of houndwork than with a pack of fox-hounds. The chase is more deliberate, the ringing nature of the hare's course and her dodging tactics bring her much more into contact with the sportsman than in the case of the fox; and, above all, the puzzling out of the line is not impeded, as it too often is among fox-hunters in these latter days, by a crowd of many scores, nay, hundreds of people the great bulk of whom are mere sight-seers, who never can and never will care for the actual details of hunting—the best and most interesting part of the whole business—but come out, but too often, to show off themselves, their clothes, and their horses, content if they glean a gallop or two and get safely over a certain number of fences. In my humble opinion—an opinion that I know to be unfashionable—much of the true spirit of the chase has vanished in modern fox-hunting. The men who really enjoyed the sport as it ought to be enjoyed were the squires and farmers of the eighteenth century, when fields were small and only those connected with the land and their friends went out. I have seen a great many packs of first-rate fox-hounds at work, and have enjoyed many a good run with them, but I am bound to confess that I have always far more appreciated the sport on a quiet day when no more than forty or fifty people were out, than upon one of those unpleasant crushes with the Pytchley and other packs, when the squadrons of horsemen and women were to be numbered by hundreds. I am convinced that the vast majority of these people know nothing of the real delights of hunting as enjoyed by our forefathers in the quieter and happier days of English sport.

There is no better way to teach a lad something of the inner mysteries of hunting proper than to enter him with a quiet pack of harriers or beagles. He will learn infinitely more of the real science of houndwork than if he had been put on a pony and sent to a meet of fox-hounds. What, too often, is the experience of a lad with fox-hounds? He rides to the meet, sees a vast number of fashionable folk, amusing themselves upon various topics, and trots off to a woodland or gorse covert, at one side of which he will probably be shepherded. Then presently he may hear a piercing yell or two, a twang of the horn, and learn, amid much hubbub and confusion, that the fox is away. He gallops on with the crowd, seeing little of the hounds, and presently, if he

has luck, he may see the remnants of the fox being broken up. In such a case, and this is but too often a typical instance, he has observed absolutely nothing of hunting proper. He has had, with a crowd of people, a more or less exciting gallop, and some fencing, but nothing more. This, after all, is not hunting. With a pack of harriers, mounted or on foot—and foot-beagles are a first-rate means of entering a lad to sport—he would have seen the whole panorama of the chase, as it were, unfolded before his eyes, from beginning to end. He would have seen the hare found, noted the first wild clamour of the pack as they view her or get on to her line, seen her driven at speed over the grass meadows and hunted steadily over the plough, have watched her devious windings and manoeuvres, her infinite resource and stratagem, the marvellous cunning with which she will weave a maze of her own footsteps and foil her own line, the artfulness with which she will push another hare out of her warm seat, leaving her to stand before hounds and carry them far away from herself and her own imminent peril, or observed the wit which enables her to make use of the presence of a flock of strong-scented sheep, cause a check to that ravening pursuit, and so, for a time, put a greater distance between herself and her pursuers. All these and many other phases of hunting can be, and are, witnessed daily by any follower of a harrier or beagle pack. Can the average pursuer of fox-hounds say that he enjoys the like experiences? I trow not! I am, of course, well aware that among the quieter provincial packs, where fields are small, you can still see and enjoy fox-hunting proper, as it ought to be seen and enjoyed by its true votaries. But, for the modern fashionable form of chase, the wild gallop among a crowd of people who ride ‘at,’ but seldom ‘to,’ hounds! Well! I have tasted this sort of thing many a time, and—I prefer hare-hunting. It is the real thing, hunting itself; the other is not. I am by no means yet a veteran; but I would sooner hunt a hare with a dozen keen sportsmen, than gallop after a fox among 300 people, the majority of whom know little of and care less for the true inwardness—the details, the science, and the history—of the sport in which they suppose they are taking a part.

It is true that a hare will occasionally, in place of displaying her manifold tricks and artifices in the fashion I have attempted to describe, run straight on end for miles at a stretch. Now and again a travelling jack, or a hare driven by sheer fright out of her own line of country, will run in as straight-necked a fashion as a fox, not dallying, as is his or her wont, to display those wonderful

shifts and expedients in which this animal so greatly excels. The best run I have seen for years past happened in this wise: A hare in the first five minutes of the chase ran through a crowd of folk come out to see a Christmas meet. There was so much hallooing that the animal was startled nearly out of her skin. She ran clean away from her own country, traversed four or five parishes, and was killed seven miles away in a straight line, after an extraordinary run of two and three-quarter hours, in which some fourteen miles of country, as hounds ran, were accomplished. In this run—it was with a foot-pack—the hare left her field toiling far in the rear, and I am free to confess we saw little of her and her movements. Following stubbornly on over marsh, wide dykes, ploughs, and pastures, we finished—four survivors of the field—half-an-hour behind the pack, and had the satisfaction of finding that the hare had been saved, in the very nick of time, by a couple of countrymen, just as hounds were breaking her up. A still more extraordinary incident than this happened with the same hounds—a fine, old-fashioned Sussex pack—two years since. We had a great run over Pevensy Marshes with a capital hare—the marsh hares of this district are wonderfully stout—and presently the chase took us over a wide stretch of flat, pebbly beach, from which the sea has long receded. To this tract, locally known as ‘The Crumbles,’ hares often betake themselves as a last resource. As a rule, on this scentless area, they manage to beat hounds and escape; but on this occasion scent was excellent, and hounds ran with wonderful fire and vigour, even over this wilderness of shingle. As a last resource the sinking hare took to the sea, and was actually killed in the salt water—a thing I have never before witnessed, or even heard of. The wild red-deer of Exmoor, as everyone knows, takes readily to the sea when hard put to it. Probably a fox would do the same; but for a timid beast like the hare to head boldly out into salt water seemed to me at the time a remarkable incident. Hares are, of course, excellent swimmers. I have on several occasions watched a hare, during the progress of a run, canter down the bank of a broadish stream, slip into the water, and swim easily across. Ordinary marsh dykes, which test the jumping powers of bipeds, they fly readily enough. It is to be remembered, of course, that a hare can take off easily from the very margin of the dyke, which a man cannot do.

There is, one is glad to find, a tendency to revert to pure, old-fashioned harrier blood again, and not to depend so much on the

fox-hound strain, which, in the opinion of many sound judges, is not, in its unadulterated form, so well fitted for this kind of hunting. The fox-hound is too fast and too impetuous for hare-hunting; and even with dwarf fox-hounds the hare is too greatly over-matched. After all, every beast of chase—and surely, of all animals, the timid hare?—should be entitled to a fair chance for its life, which, when hunted with pure fox-hound blood, it does not always receive. Personally, I believe in hunting hare with pure harriers, if they can possibly be obtained. From centuries of hunting this species of quarry the true harrier has developed various traits which fit him especially for this kind of work. I do not mean to say that one would care to revert to the slowest type of the Old Southern hound, where each hound of the pack was so accustomed to dwell upon the scent, and to waste time in raising its deep, mellow voice in the very ecstasy of its enjoyment, that it took several hours to find, hunt, and kill a hare. But I do believe in a certain amount of deliberation and patience—valuable characteristics of true harrier blood—and the chase of the hare is, to my mind, distinctly enlivened by the full, deep, mellow note of the harrier—a legacy, doubtless, from the blend of Southern hound blood. ‘Nimrod,’ fifty or sixty years ago, wrote with contemptuous indifference of the ‘old psalm-singing harriers,’ and evidently expected hare-hounds to approximate closely to fox-hounds. But the blood of the ‘old psalm-singer’ is still found invaluable, even at the present day. A dash of fox-hound is, no doubt, very useful. It tends to get rid of those slack loins, splay feet, and poor thighs which are, undoubtedly, somewhat characteristic of the old English harrier. Peter Beckford, who began life as a harrier man, recommends, in his admirable ‘Thoughts on Hunting,’ a cross ‘between the large, slow-hunting harrier and the little fox-beagle: the former,’ he says, ‘are too dull, too heavy, and too slow; the latter too lively, too light, and too fleet.’ The fox-beagle, by the way, seems to have been employed in Beckford’s time in hunting the fox on foot. Brown states that the harrier used in the early part of the nineteenth century was originally bred from a double cross between the small beagle, the Southern hound, and the dwarf fox-hound. That seems to me to be an excellent blend, and it is probable that most packs of so-called ‘pure harriers’ of the present day are largely of this breeding. Somerville, who flourished between 1677 and 1742, hunted, as did so many squires of that period, hare, fox, and otter. His hare-hounds were bred between the fleet Cotswold beagle and the

Southern hound, and he seems usually to have maintained about twelve couple of them, in addition to six couple of fox-hounds and five couple of otter-hounds. No one who has read Somerville's wonderful description of a hare-hunt in Book II. of his poem *The Chace* can fail to recognise that this was a master of his craft. *The Chace* is a classic very largely resorted to by Beckford in his own admirable work on hunting, and to this day it remains quite unimpaired in value, unexcelled in its mastery of the subject. All is first-rate, but, starting from those alluring lines

To thy downs,
Fair Cotswold, where the well-breath'd beagle climbs
With matchless speed thy green, aspiring brow,
And leaves the lagging multitude behind,

the description of the chase of the hare is inimitable, unsurpassed. It is clear that Somerville dearly loved this form of hunting. Alas! that so good a sportsman and so excellent a writer should have fallen upon evil times. He hunted up to the end, but drink was the death of him. His favourite beverage after a day's hunting seems to have been a mixture of rum, black-currant jelly, and a very little warm water, a compound comforting enough in moderation, but, taken in quantities, sufficient to destroy the stoutest fox-hunter that ever climbed to his saddle.

It cannot, I think, be urged too often that a strong admixture of Old Southern hound blood is invaluable to any pack of harriers. It is from this blood that we get the wonderful scenting power of the true harrier, as well as his fine, deep note. For hare-hunting you must have nose, and patience, for picking out a poor scent over cold ploughs, or tracing accurately the wonderful mazes of the hare's flight. Too much of the fling and dash of fox-hounds spoils sport; and it ought never to be forgotten that hereditary instinct must count for something in hunting hare. Thus harrier blood is better for the purposes of hare-hunting than fox-hound blood. As regards size, from 18 inches to 19 inches should be the limit. No good harrier, in the opinion of many first-rate judges, should exceed 19 inches. Beagles should range between 12½ inches and 15½ inches. From 14 inches to 15 inches is, preferably, about the right height for foot-beagles. Beagles of 12 inches or less in height are somewhat too small for the sport, and hare-hunting becomes with them too often a long and fatiguing process, not always ending, as it ought to do, in a kill.

As to colour and marking, fox-hound colour is now much more

often than not that seen with harrier packs. I have hunted for several seasons with a Sussex pack which consists largely of the fine old 'blue-mottle' blood, a type of which I confess myself extremely fond. There is a good deal of the Southern hound strain in this pack; they average 19 inches, have long pendulous ears, old-fashioned heads, with somewhat lofty brows, deepset eyes, and magnificent voices. They possess, however, in spite of their old-fashioned look, plenty of pace, which, combined with their undeniable scenting powers, enables them to show first-rate sport and kill a large number of hares each season. Black-and-tan is an old-fashioned hound colour which seems, among harriers and beagles, somewhat likely to come into favour again. It is to be hoped, however, that judges at hound shows will not patronise this colour unduly and make a craze of it. I have seen sport with two packs of black-and-tan harriers—the old Edenbridge, a Kentish pack, now extinct, and the Bexhill, a Sussex pack. In the Edenbridge there was undoubtedly a good deal of Southern hound blood, but I am always inclined to think that black-and-tan is too much of a bloodhound colour and that from this strain are largely derived most of our modern black-and-tan harriers. Certainly this is the case with the Bexhill, a pack hunting in East Sussex. There is a black-and-tan strain in Ireland, known as the 'Kerry Beagle,' which is said to have a very ancient history of its own. One pack, the Scarteen Beagles, have, I believe, been maintained and hunted by the same family—the Ryans—for some generations. These hunt from Emly House, County Tipperary. From their size, 23 inches, which is big even from the harrier point of view, they are evidently far more harriers than beagles. The Lyme Harriers, a Cheshire pack, are described as 'black-and-tan and Old Southern' hounds, and Mr. E. C. Meysey-Thompson's pack, hunting from Barnard Castle, consist also partly of black-and-tan blood.

The language of venery is an absorbing but a very large subject, requiring far more space than I am enabled to spare here. I have noticed among old-fashioned country folk hunting with harriers in the South of England the cry 'Hue! Hue!' (Hoo! Hoo!) used to attract or encourage hounds, which, while seldom heard nowadays, seems to have a very ancient origin. Identically the same cry was used by Henry II. ('Curt Mantle') in cheering on his hounds. This Plantagenet was a great and skilled hunter, as extravagantly fond of the chase as any of his Norman ancestors. 'Hue and cry' is doubtless derived from this old hunting exclamation.

Hare-finding is an art in itself, and that a most valuable one to any pack of harriers. Comparatively few have the knack of it, but you will usually find with hare-hunters, and especially among those hunting on foot, sometimes one individual, sometimes two or three, who has or have in perfection the rare faculty of being readily able to find a sitting hare in her form. It is an instinct nearly allied to genius. Harriers are not by any means good finders of hares; it is notorious that they do not readily see or even scent their quarry when seated. It is of course, as Beckford long since pointed out, a mistake to let them get accustomed to rely upon having their hares found for them. It makes them lazy and wild, and with such a pack, instead of spreading out and finding their game for themselves, they may be constantly noticed at this stage of the day's proceedings, with their heads up, looking out eagerly for a halloo or for some particular person who, they are well aware, is accustomed to find hares for them. Yet while deprecating this demoralising habit and insisting that hounds must be taught, so soon as they are thrown off, to hunt industriously for themselves, I am bound to confess that the hare-finder, usually some quiet, reserved personage, who marches alone far apart from the field, is an invaluable ally to any pack. I owe many and many a rousing hunt to such a one. How often have I seen his square hat go up quietly, and the hare put gently away from her seat, in front of hounds, as they were being brought to the spot, so that she might have a fair start. That square hat never plays one false, as a halloo often does. It betokens the presence of a hare, and, when hounds are running, always the *hunted* hare, as surely as the English summer brings ruddy apples. It cannot be too much insisted in hare-hunting that silence is golden. Nothing makes hounds wilder and spoils sport more than constant halloing. There is, however, in my humble opinion, no great harm in a view when the hare is first found. It heartens the pack, and the glorious crash of music which comes startles the hare and makes her run straighter and harder; and after all hounds are very quickly brought to their noses. The first hedge passed by the hare suffices for this.

Horseflesh need not be an extravagant item in the case of hare-hunting. You need more a handy horse than a great galloper. Hares so seldom run straight, and so perpetually come round to their old country again, that pace is not an absolute essential in your mount. It is, however, a necessity of the first importance that your horse should be a good jumper, as well as a

temperate and a handy hunter. A hot, excitable beast, bursting for a wild gallop, is useless with harriers, where you are for ever twisting and turning, and the man who sticks to gates and cuts corners often sees as much as those who ride the line and take every fence. With some few packs, however, you do occasionally need a nag that is not only a perfect fencer, but a good galloper. With the High Peak Harriers, for instance, which hunt mostly upon old grass pastures, thickly intersected with stone walls, in the neighbourhood of Buxton and Bakewell, a first-rate jumper and a fair galloper is a prime necessity. A bungling 'lepper' in this country would bring his rider to hopeless grief. I have seen more and better jumping in a run with this pack than in many a hunt with good fox-hounds. The enclosures are small, and the Derbyshire stone walls need good and clean leaping. Luckily the turf is sound and the take-off usually pretty good.

I have said that hunting on foot with harriers and beagles has had a very marked increase in this country during the last score of years. It is an excellent symptom, for there is no more health-giving sport in the world to young men and maidens, ay, and to middle-aged folk too, than a hunt on foot with a merry cry of beagles or harriers. Harriers for this sport, by the way, should not exceed 19 inches; 18 inches is an even better limit. It is a mistake to suppose, however, that even 18 or 19 inch harriers are too big for foot-hunting. The Sussex foot pack with which I see a good deal of sport are 19-inch harriers, and yet the field, including even those who do not care or are unable to run, see the main part of the hunting. Much of the country hunted over is, I admit, open marshland, over which wide views are obtained from the neighbouring hills. It is pleasant to see how much the farmers and country people enjoy a pack of foot-harriers or beagles. There is something inexpressibly cheerful in a pack of hounds, whatever may be their quarry. The sight of the hounds, the grand sound of their voices, appeal to but few in vain. They stir and awaken in the breast of everyone, man, woman, or child, those feelings of romance and adventure which in these days lie but too often dormant within the breast of all of us. There is something in the blithe music of the huntsman's horn which to most people is irresistible. In the sleepest and remotest village, the passage of a pack of hounds—even a 'cry' of little beagles—is a tonic which brings something of brightness to the eye, something of cheerfulness to the countenance, even of the oldest man or woman bent with age and rheumatism.

As for the emancipated girl of the present day, she appears to enjoy beagling or a run with foot-harriers far more even than she appreciates hockey, tennis, and other games. I do not say that all, or anything like all, girls are fitted for long runs. A woman is not built, as is a man, naturally for running. Yet I have seen a slip of a girl trotting on foot with a pack of harriers for miles, seeing as much of the sport as any man present. Hunting with foot packs is essentially a democratic form of sport, in which all classes, the yokel and the rural postman—I know several country postmen who are keen harrier men—can see as much of the hunt as their betters. It is, too, essentially a friendly form of sport, unspoiled by large fields, and unvexed by the intrusion of the moneyed stranger. The mere man of money-bags is, happily, on foot, no better off—usually he is much worse off—than the farmer's son. This is a sport in which a man's pleasure depends entirely upon his own wind, muscles, pluck, and clean living; and the glutton, the gourmet, and the self-indulgent can have, thank Heaven, no part or lot in it.

An athletic training in one's youth is, of course, an excellent prelude to hunting on foot. As an old athlete, I can vouch for that fact. Of course, I speak only of those who actually follow hounds. Plenty of people can see as much sport as they need without running a hundred yards or jumping a ditch. But a man who can long-jump or high-jump a little, and has a sound wind, scores greatly over those who lack these advantages. In the country in which I see most of my foot-hunting, over Pevensy Marshes, a man who follows hounds must be able to jump water. Even a ten-foot dyke, with fairly even banks, takes some negotiating in winter weather, and in thickish boots and winter clothes; it is a far different thing, this style of leaping, from clearing eighteen feet in running shoes and an athlete's costume on a smooth piece of ground, with perhaps an ash take-off. Twelve or fourteen feet of water, plus a rough and perhaps slippery take-off, means a big jump in such circumstances. One has heard of a fox-hunter clearing nine yards of water on a particularly fine horse. That was an exceptional and a very rare feat. My own experience is that the average good long-jumper on foot can beat the average mounted hunter over water. Few brooks, indeed, contain more than fourteen or fifteen feet of water. Twelve feet or so of water is a fair jump, even for a horse, and, as everyone knows, it is not every horse that cares to face water at all. I have seen Sussex dykes that would pound the best long-

jumper. In such a case, foot-hunters who have their hearts in their sport, especially with a sinking hare in front, and hounds rapidly closing up for the final scene, are not to be deterred by water and mud, but go in and through, if they cannot get over clean. Only yesterday, a mighty splash in front of me told me of such an episode. English foot-hunters, in truth, are composed of better fibre than that French *piqueur* (hunter) of whom Beckford writes so amusingly. Beckford was hunting stag in the neighbourhood of Turin. The stag one day broke covert and left the forest. At the first ditch, Beckford, who had got over, noticed that the huntsman drew rein. 'Allons, piqueur,' he cried, 'sautez donc.' To which the huntsman replied, very coolly, 'Non, pardi. C'est un double fossé—je ne saute pas les doubles fossés.'

Hare-hunting, then, that sport so dear to our hound-loving forefathers, seems likely to survive easily the twentieth century. Probably it will live far beyond that limit. Long may it flourish, as it has long endured. To the maturer foot-hunter some lines of Somervile's seem to me always singularly appropriate. They are written of hounds, but they apply with equal happiness to the human hunter, to whom a certain reserve of strength and pace is always of inestimable use at the end of a run.

Happy the man who with unrival'd speed
Can pass his fellows, and with pleasure view
The struggling pack; how in the rapid course
Alternate they preside, and, jostling, push
To guide the dubious scent: how giddy youth,
Oft babbling, errs, by wiser age reprov'd;
How, niggard of his strength, the wise old hound
Hangs in the rear, till some important point
Rouse all his diligence, or till the Chace
Sinking he finds; then to the head he springs,
With thirst of glory fir'd, and wins the prize.

H. A. BRYDEN.

Tragedy in Outline.

FIVE flights of stairs above the street,
 Nor yet aloof from London cries,
 We made our nest, our home,—ah ! sweet
 Beyond all heartfelt harmonies

Sounded that little loveliest word
 Whispered by one whose hair was bright
 With all love's lavished treasure-hoard
 To me, returning with the night.

Our view, alas ! it was but one
 Wide waste of dwellings dolorous ;
 Yet sometimes, too, the miser sun,
 Glowing contrition, lit for us

The sullen, sullied stream that crawls,
 Sick for the waves and cleanly sand ;
 The dusky bubble of St. Paul's,
 Dim as a dream of fairyland ;

The wharves ; the long embankment, where
 The storm-whirled seagull preens her wings ;
 The giant towers of Westminster
 That watch above the tombs of kings.

All these we saw from our retreat,
 A long low room, but bright with flowers.
 (I sometimes go and watch there yet ;
 Ah me ! the hours, the empty hours.)

There, hand in hand, we sat alone
 And marked the day desert the street ;
 The stealthy shadows, one by one,
 Crept down the courts on panther feet ;

Stately and silent, ivory-bright
 Like a king's barge, the moon went by
 The argent navies of the night
 Wide-anchored in the sapphire sky.

Ah, happy eves ! and happy days
 When summer, drowsy princess, woke,
 And, stored with scent of wild-rose ways,
 The south-born breezes pierced the smoke

And scoured the streets, until the lark,
 My neighbour's prisoner, sick and mute,
 Nursing through all the winter's dark
 Its vow of silence absolute,

Changed to a poet once again,
 Saw its old nest and all the sky,
 And in an ecstasy of pain
 Sobbed the wild dirge of liberty.

Ah ! panther-cruel, creeping dark,
 Could I not read your prophecy ?
 I, who had caught and caged my lark
 That she might always sing to me ?

Dear to her heart the opal dawns,
 The lordly sunset's scarlet state,
 And the bright breath of windy lawns
 A thousand years immaculate ;

And dear to her the flowers and ferns
 In the deep combe that was her home,
 Behind the haughtiest cliff that spurns
 The thunder-voiced Atlantic foam.

Beyond the vale the mighty moor
 Curves to the sea-rim. Harsh and clear,
 On angry nights when groaned the door
 And windows rattled, she could hear

The yelling wolf-pack of the gale
 Whirl down the moor to rend the waves,
 And lashed by winter's sleety flail
 The swollen waters crack the caves.

TRAGEDY IN OUTLINE.

This was her life, her breath. Ah, me!
Could I not learn that rock and flower,
Salt wind and wave, had grown to be
The sum of her frail vital power?

My snares were in the paths she trod,
In wild-rose ways I laid my lures,
And caught my bird. She died—oh, God!
She died; and yet my life endures.

For even as the upturn weed
And casual wayside blossom wanes
In dens of London toilers, freed
For one strange day, to roam the lanes,

So my rare lily withered; Fate
Swooped like a hawk upon our nest;
Death set his heel upon my mate,—
Murdered the music in her breast.

But still she sings beyond the pearled
Gate of the day, God's chorister.

She would have sought me o'er the world,
And now I may not follow her.

ST. JOHN LUCAS.

The Hedge.

MAN, though nominally a rational being, is not given to over-much thinking, and, like Peter of old, is prone to call common—even when not regarding as unclean—much that is manifestly let down from Heaven. So it comes about that whatever is familiar ceases to excite question, thought, or even notice.

This is true not only of the works of Nature *per se*, but even of such of them as are modified by man himself. To take one instance, literally obvious to every wayfarer by road or traveller by rail—namely, the hedges, which in miles upon miles map the fair face of our fertile land. Like the lines of the human face, they betoken much, and if read aright are seen to have no slight connection with the history of the country. Yet few of us, it is to be feared, have ever bestowed a thought upon their origin, their varieties, and their meaning; or, if at all, only, perchance, when we have stood upon some hill heaved high above the land, between the flat blue plain of the sea on one hand and the undulating earth on the other, the crests of whose solid billows are crowned by copses and woods rising among a network of thin green lines of hedgerows.

So accustomed are we countrymen to live and move and have our being among hedges, that most of us, who are not actually agriculturists, have come to look upon them as purely products of Nature, whereas, with few exceptions, hedges are the works of human hands applied to vital powers and products of Nature, and adapted to some definite end in her economy. It is only a living, growing fence that should be called a hedge; a boundary of dead wood, iron, brick, stone, and that invention of the devil, barbed wire, being walls or fences only—the last-named, however, partaking in addition strongly of the nature of an offence.

The origin and *raison d'être* of a hedge is to act as a fence, a boundary, a shelter, or a screen; or as a combination of any or all

of these. For instance, a hedge may not only fence a field from the invasion or evasion of cattle: it may also be an inter-parochial boundary. In addition it may also serve as a shelter for cattle, 'in the somer for hette, in the winter for lothe,' as a Tudor writer expresses it.

In this connection, too, a hedge, by its leaning, may afford a very good index of that quarter of the sky from which the prevalent wind is wont to blow; very strikingly evident in old, exposed hedgerows within five or six miles of the sea, or in high, upland, inland districts. To the virtue of this sheltering quality of hedges we doubtless owe, in some measure, their survival, in spite of the cheapness and superior effectiveness of the various mechanical fences. Lastly, but by no means least, the hedge may be considered as an object of ornament or a thing of beauty. Here, though man has effected much, particularly in those fantastically cut and trimmed hedges of yew or box, Nature, who 'transcends our moods,' however much inclined to beauty, has far transcended our methods, as may be particularly seen in the hedges which border and embower the lanes of Devonshire, the wild luxuriant hedges of the South Down country, or the trimmer hedgerows of Warwickshire, overshadowed by umbrageous and ubiquitous elms. These are, in fact, the three chief types of the hedges of our country.

Those of Devonshire consist essentially of high banks of earth, on the top of which grows the hedge of hawthorn, hazel, ash, and oak, beautified with splendid streamers of wild rose and honeysuckle, the banks embellished with a luxuriant growth of flowers which gleam like gems among masses of multitudinous ferns. These hedge-banks border not only the king's highways and the people's byways—which are very near akin in narrowness—but also bound and fence the fields of green pastures and the red plough-land. The origin of these peculiar hedges has been variously accounted for; and the theory that many of these deep lanes were originally water-worn tracks leaves unaccounted for the similar hedges of the fields. The Warwickshire, or Midland hedges in general, are mainly made of hawthorn, with here and there some privet or cornel.

The usual method of making a hawthorn hedge is to dig a double trench a spade-breadth wide, throwing up the soil in a ridge between, upon which are planted two- or three-year old 'quicksets'; the young hedge thus formed being protected by 'post-and-rail.'

A well set and grown hedge of this sort is practically impenetrable, and is seen at its best alongside our railways. Bordering the Midland roads they give them a neat and almost prim appearance, being usually kept well cut and trimmed; while sturdy oaks here and there, or ash trees, chestnuts, poplars, and the ever-present umbrageous elms, afford variety to hedges that would otherwise be scarcely less monotonous in aspect than a stone wall. These wayside elms are variously treated in different parts of the country, and so modify considerably the aspect of the hedges. In the Thames valley they are very generally denuded of branches for a height of halfway or more up the main trunk; in the southern counties they are suffered to grow much as they please—subject to the road-surveyor's decision. Anciently the hundred court or the leet was wont to have a say in such matters. Thus, in a hundred court-roll in the reign of Henry V. we read that the hundred men 'presented' that 'the trees in the Lord's park so overhang the King's Highway that the said Highway in consequence suffers detriment.' The 'Lord,' in this case, was the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

The third type of hedge is that which is seen in its wild perfection in the immediate neighbourhood of the South Downs of Sussex. In these hedges, which fence the fields that foot the Downs, the variety of their constituent shrubs seems extraordinary, especially to those whose lives are led among the lines of hawthorn hedges in 'the Shires'—for so your true-born son of Sussex calls all counties north of the Surrey hills.

In a few hundred yards of hedgerow hereabout seven or eight different kinds of shrub may readily be found, while the number might be increased to ten or more if the distance were extended to a mile.

One of the most beautiful of these is the 'traveller's joy,' whose trailing vine-like stem bears masses of foliage, in which gleam the starry cream-coloured flowers, to be succeeded by the curious fluffy seed-pods. When it has once been seen growing in all its wild luxuriance of foliage, flower, and seed, there remains no question of the fitness or the meaning of its name, for under the shade and shelter of such thick umbrage the traveller finds complete harbourage from a too torrid sun or from tempestuous rain. The spindle tree is another characteristic shrub of these hedges, and one not without its uses, as the charcoal made from its wood is peculiarly valuable to artists; while in the days of the spinning-wheel it was equally sought after for the making of

spindles; and hence its name. In the old 'spinning books' to be found in ancient parish chests items of expenditure for spindles are often met with; such as, in 1786, in one I have seen, 'Item. pd. for 1 doz. of spindles 1s.'

This shrub bears smooth pale green lanceolate leaves, of a somewhat wavy surface; and its small star-shaped, greenish flowers in nowise give promise of the prettiness of its fruit, whose five pink segments of capsule open to disclose a rich orange-coloured seed.

The cornel, another common shrub, is too well known to need description; but it is worthy of notice as being one of the two bushes which contribute to give a strong touch of warm colour to the cold woods of winter. The other shrub is the saugh-willow, and together these two combine to brighten the sombre hibernal hues with the reds, crimsons, and purples of their leafless branches. As common as the cornel is the maple, a shrub impossible to be passed unnoticed in the autumn, for then, when almost every tree is coloured by the alchemy of Nature, the maple gleams brighter than them all, a veritable burning bush. Nor is it a tree of ornament only when living, for its wood is of a singular beauty in grain, which has been appreciated for ages. Among the Romans it was a prime favourite for furniture, especially for making cabinets and table-tops; and it was scarcely less sought after in mediæval times, when it was particularly prized for the making of 'mazers,' a kind of drinking-vessel, a cup or goblet; and for bowls, being usually rimmed, footed or covered with silver. These, as highly prized articles, make a frequent appearance as legacies in mediæval wills.

Two kindred shrubs, the guelder rose and the wayfaring tree, are common constituents of these hedges. The leaves of the former, deeply cut, and not of uniform shape, are singularly beautiful in autumn, and its clustered fruit, equally beautiful, is also not of uniform colour until quite ripe, one side being yellow and the other red. The wayfaring tree, the particular fitness of whose name is not apparent, is noticeable for its thick, mealy leaves, and for being the earliest flowering shrub of these hedge-rows in the spring; and its crimson berries, conspicuous among the dark green leaves, consequently look somewhat out of date among the buds and flowers of summer.

Whether the elder is an indigenous shrub has been disputed, but at least it is thoroughly well established in our hedges—to the great benefit of birds, who feed with avidity on its dark purple

berries. Many are the migrants, such as blackcaps, redstarts, and ring-ousels, which make their last meal on this fruit preliminary to their crossing of the Channel. For these are the hedges and these the hills whereabouts Gilbert White, in his frequent journeys, observed so many troops of migratory birds, the ring-ousels in particular, nowadays much diminished in numbers. Such are some of the constituents of the hedges that lie along the foot of the South Down hills. These hedges, I take it, are probably the most ancient in the land, and may represent the fringe of that great forest called Anderida, which at the time of the Roman invasion stretched from the northern slopes of the Downs to the foot of the Surrey hills. As we see them now they follow the hollows of the hills and mount over the insteps, as it were, of these sloping spurs, whereby at right angles to the main range the upland subsides into the plain.

Here, the soil being light and tillable, and returning rich results in corn crops, would be the first land in primitive times to come under the culture of the ancient share and coulter. The primitive tillers of the soil, if they did not actually make hedges, would at least leave the fringes of the forest clearing to keep their sheep pasturing on the Downs from breaking into the tempting green crops of the arable land. And thus, as they are the most ancient, so they are the most natural hedges in the land. It is impossible to conceive of them as having been deliberately set with all this variety of tree and shrub. Birds, no doubt, have been active agents in sowing the seeds of many of their constituents; for, indeed, these hedges, broad, high, primitive, and remote from dwellings, are ideal haunts and habitations for a large variety of birds, a paradise whose perfection is only marred by man. For in the very season when quietude and peace are most essential to the birds, when full of the toils of building their nests and hatching out and rearing their young, then also is the time when they are most exposed to the ravages of the idle shepherd boys. At that season the ewes and lambs pasture thereabouts, and the boys, devolving most of their duty upon their dogs, finding their large leisure hang heavily upon their hands, employ it only too industriously in searching these fringes of copse or these thick hedgerows for the birds' nests they may contain.

Nevertheless, a fair number of birds contrive successfully to rear their young, and many are the nests I have found of missel thrush, song thrush, blackbird, greenfinch, chaffinch (not a very common bird hereabouts), hedgewarbler, whitethroat (common and

lesser) yellowhammer, common bunting, red-backed shrike or butcher bird, and turtle dove, with an occasional bullfinch, but never once a goldfinch. For these two latter are essentially birds of the Wealden district as regards their nesting habits; but they are frequently met with about the South Down neighbourhood in autumn and winter. The turtle dove, one of the most beautiful of our migrants, can nowhere be better observed than in the fields along the foot of the Downs. Here they feed in the fallow, the green crops, or the stubble, in flocks of ten or a dozen, roosting and nesting in the neighbouring hedgerows. When, alarmed, they spread their wings and tail for flight, the rich mottled brown of their plumage, with their dark fan-shaped tails edged with a broad band of white, forms a pleasant picture of bird life. The red-backed shrike is somewhat common, and there are few fairer birds to look upon, despite his habitual frown and carnivorous habits. Gilbert White speaks of this bird as rare about Selborne.

When we come to the history of hedges, we find that they make an appearance in many connections in rural economy: in the daily details of life, in the relations between laws and customs, lords and peasantry.

We know that the ancients were acquainted with quickset hedges, and Varro speaks of live and dead hedges, ditches, and banks, chiefly along the roadsides; and he mentions 'spina,' or thorns of some kind or other, as a constituent element in them. Around the clearings in the forests, or the corn crops of the open lands, the ancient Britons must necessarily have made hedges or fences of some description. Since these, our ancestors, were already celebrated for their wickerwork, woven from the willows which abounded in the backwaters of their rivers, the margins of their marshes, and the silent pools of their forests, we may judge that their hedges were constructed in a somewhat similar manner, and that they consisted to a great extent of live twigs interwoven, and strengthened with stakes and posts. And with the same kind of hedge, but stronger, they protected their dwellings and their 'wicks.'

In the Middle Ages we read of a variety of hedge called 'con-testa,' formed of posts yoked together, as the name suggests, with interwoven twigs, which, to judge from an ancient illustration, connected the posts at the top only. Even at this period England was noted as a country 'full of hedges'; but this fulness, as noted by foreign observers, must have been merely comparative with

other lands, for there is plenty of proof that the open-field system of agriculture very generally prevailed, whereby the holdings of the various tenants lay scattered in the fenceless fields, divided from each other only by balks of unploughed land. Consequent upon this came the need for the great variety of 'wards' and 'herds,' which is still evidenced by the common occurrence of personal names with those suffixes, such as Hayward, Kenward (kine-ward), Coward (cow-herd), and Shepherd.

Such hedges as there were existed between the lord's demesne land and the holdings of the villeins, and around the small gardens of these and of the cottars, and around the numerous parks, the orchards, and the church-garth.

This fenceless condition, with its manifold inconveniences, was doomed to desuetude, symptoms of which were appearing even before the important changes in agriculture resulting from the great upheaval of the Reformation, the development of the woollen trade and the consequent increased importance of sheep, and the introduction of turnips and other green crops.

During these early ages hedges have occasional mention in records of national life. From the laws of Ina, republished by Alfred the Great, it appears that occasionally a tenant would take it into his head to hedge his holding 'in the common meadowland divided into strips,' while another would refrain; and regulations are laid down to meet the complications that might arise. Here it may be remarked that the Saxon word used for 'to hedge,' 'tynanne,' survives in essence until to-day in 'tine,' a West-country word for hedging; and also in tinnet or tennet, meaning the wood used in the process, an allowance of which was claimed in a great number of manors by the tenants up to comparatively recent times, anciently under the name of 'hedge-bote' or 'hey-bote.' Thus we find a dispute on this subject coming even before Parliament, for in the fourteenth century Richard le Waleys, Lord of Glynde and Pelinges, complains that his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury (his overlord) 'has robbed him . . . and for two years seized his heybote pertaining to his manor of Glynde; . . . therefore he prays our Lord the King, for God and his mercy, that he will keep him in his estate,' &c.

Under the Saxon *régime* one of the most universal rent services was the obligation of the ceorl (the villein of the next domination) to do an allotted number of yards of 'gafol-hedging' for the lord 'in his own time,' to trim the deer-hedge and to keep it whole.

Nor was the thegn, or lord himself, exempt from maintaining the deer-hedge of his lord the king; while all had to contribute to 'hedge the burg,' vill or tun.

An obligation more widely spread was that of the men of the hundred to maintain the wayside hedges, to trim them, and to keep whole, and those who failed in those duties were duly amerced, subject to amendment within an allotted time. Thus, to quote one out of countless instances, a court-roll of the time of Henry VII. records that a certain tenant was 'presented' for allowing his hedge over against the lord's park to become defective, and he was given a set period within which to make amends, '*sub pœnâ xxd.*' Another is seen in a court-roll of the reign of Elizabeth, when at a hallmote three tenants were 'presented' as failing in their obligation to trim their hedge and clear the ditch, and they were allowed the liberal grace of five months in which to carry out the requisite hedging, '*sub pœnâ 11s. vid.*' each.

There remains another aspect under which to consider hedges, and that is in their relation to surface geology. It is particularly in the South Down country that this point of view is instructive. The Downs, it is needless to say, run east to west, and are pierced at intervals and at right angles by little rivers which run from the watershed of the Weald southwards into the Channel. These rivers, whose valleys show clear evidences of having been estuaries of the sea—and that at no very remote period—are fed at short intervals by small streams or brooks; and their little valleys, in their turn, show as distinct evidences of having been in their time estuaries, as it were, or narrow long creeks of the river into which they flow.

Although here and there alongside one or other of these streams distinct traces of a river-terrace are to be seen, yet it is mainly by the hedges that notice is drawn to the altered condition of the face of the country through which these streams flow, for, running roughly parallel to them, one sees on either side, at a distance, it may be, of fifty or a hundred yards, a hedge set, perhaps, on a little ridge; and these hedges may so run for a quarter of a mile, or a whole mile, perhaps—sinuously where the stream winds, straightly where it is straight; and not a single hedge is seen running at right angles down to the stream-side, or, as we might say, across the little valley or plain. But at intervals a line of post-and-rail fences into fields the rich meadowland. Now, what is the meaning of this arrangement, by which this long low meadow, this little valley of a little stream, has,

when divided up into fields, been fenced by post-and-rail, and not by living, hedges, while a line of ancient quickset, or a copse, or little wood runs parallel with the stream at a distance of a few score yards? Clearly it means that this low tract of land was once the bed of a much larger stream flowing into a larger river. In long process of time the river level, from various causes, sank, and its flow became less and less, until at length it subsided into a small stream. During this process the land it was deserting would be a swamp, growing rushes and grasses of a kind too coarse for cattle to graze upon; while the ground itself would be very detrimental to them from its waterlogged condition.

Hence the farmers would set their hedges on the ancient margin of the stream—the margin now of a swampy, useless tract of land. By drainage, natural and artificial, into the still subsiding stream this land has ultimately become fit for pasture and for bearing rich crops of hay, and consequently has been divided up into fields of convenient and average acreage by suitable, but not beautiful, fences of post-and-rail.

Such conditions as these may be seen in many instances down the valleys of our little Sussex rivers; and they show how great are the changes that have taken place in the conformation of our land within historic times, and it is by the hedges that the eye is guided to their recognition.

W. HENEAGE LEGGE.

*Prince Karl.*¹

BY H. C. BAILEY.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE INGENUITY OF THE MARQUIS GALEAZZO.

THE ingenious Galeazzo! Gott! The ingenious Galeazzo,' said Duke Bernhard, and he chuckled. 'Now, my Zwicka, this is a very pretty plan.'

'Pretty, sir? Folly, sir! Man has no business to move in the winter. It's not war.'

'But indeed, my Zwicka, I think it will be war,' said Duke Bernhard, and he chuckled again. 'Ah, come in, Karl. Move your fat carcass, Zwicka. So; now, Karl, the estimable and ingenious Galeazzo has gone into the waggon trade. What do you say to that?'

'That I do not know what it means,' said Karl quietly.

'And, by the Fiend! no more did Zwicka. Did you, my Zwicka? The honest and mercantile Galeazzo has been gathering waggons together from all the earth. Now, Karl, why this sudden affection for waggons? I asked Zwicka; Zwicka seemed to think it was a new game.'

'Game, sir? I said it was folly, sir. And, by Beelzebub! I say so still.'

'My Zwicka, your great wisdom is too apt to despise mere common men like Galeazzo. Karl, what have you to say? Soul of Gustavus and Wallenstein's devils! Man, you are smiling! Stop, or you'll never survive it!'

'So he means to move,' said Karl with a grim smile.

'The bull's eye!' cried Bernhard. 'Now, the philosophic Zwicka,' and he waved his hand towards Zwicka's fat red face, 'the philosophic Zwicka is quite angry with him. My Zwicka

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tells me that it is against all the principles of philosophic war to move in winter. But, then, as I tell the sage, if a philosopher hits you below the belt, all that is left for poor honest men like me is to trip up his philosophic heels.'

'Why, sir, did I bid you stop?' growled Zwicka. 'I say it's not war, this winter fighting. But, by Beelzebub! here comes an oily Italian to play soldiers with us; well, by Beelzebub! we'll kick over the table!'

'Ah, you lack the gentler graces, my Zwicka. Now I,' and he dropped his voice a little, 'I would not rob the playful Galeazzo of his sport. Let the dear child have his game! Live and let live—we will have ours!'

'Is there fresh news of Ludwig too?' asked Karl quickly.

'The butcher lacks work,' said Bernhard. 'But they tell me—indeed, my Zwicka, it was you who went on a picnic into the lands of Lichtenstein and told me that men were massing towards Schwartzsee. Now, that may mean little—he may only want the castle; or it may mean much—if you think also of Galeazzo's merchandise.'

'If he joins Ludwig he will have a large force,' said Karl thoughtfully.

'Oh, Galeazzo is no fool, except before such wisdom as my Zwicka's. I am not sorry for it. I can count on what he will do. His waggons—now, his waggons are half a stroke of genius.'

'Humph!' grunted Zwicka.

'Forgive us, my Zwicka,' cried Bernhard, 'we are but men! Now, Karl'—his face grew serious—'this must stop. We will make two bites of them. I will go and hamstring Galeazzo's waggons, and then I will come back and fall on Ludwig. I can march light. My Zwicka, we break camp to-night. We shall carry six days' rations. All the horsemen but a hundred, and three thousand musketeers. I leave you the rest, Karl. Yes! And I leave you the guns. You will have them, and—you must watch Ludwig. You will not be strong enough to meet him. Do not risk that. But watch him—watch him! He must not break away.'

So that night Duke Bernhard rode away with his cavalry, and the musketeers marching among them, holding the horses' stirrup-leathers; and they marched fast. Karl drew his little army together, and moved away towards the dark frowning rocks that hang over the Schwartzsee. Above him, on the left, the castle of Baron Hildebrand was set high in air.

Now, the Marquis Galeazzo was proud of himself, even prouder of himself than was his wont. He had devised a great plan—a plan that no man had ever dared in all the years of the war. When armies lived on the land they held, and transport that could march fast was a thing unknown, war was a summer game. So the Marquis Galeazzo in his craft made a plan that should startle the careless, blustering Duke of Weimar. Quite quietly he gathered waggons from all the countryside, and food and fodder and beasts of burden, and prepared to hurry across the hills into Lichtenstein and join with its Prince. Here is a great new strategy by which the Marquis Galeazzo earns the right to be considered a soldier; for it was a scheme—let us do him justice—which few but himself could have made. But if you would ask the reason why you have never heard before that Galeazzo was a general, you must find it in some half-dozen wiry little men on tough little horses who were seen sometimes, and mostly in the twilight, about Galeazzo's outposts. They wore mud-coloured coats, and their horses, too, at a little distance, faded into the landscape. They carried no weapons that anyone ever saw; some of them were pedlars; some of them could sell a chicken cheaply, though all round the camp the villages had been plundered again and again. They were, for the most part, in a hurry, so that they seldom had time to come far into Galeazzo's camp, and when they did come, it was for a jolly carouse with some of Galeazzo's men. They were very good companions, and they were not made drunk easily.

For some months they had enjoyed themselves and done nothing to justify their existence, when one of them, making love to a peasant girl, heard from her that Galeazzo had paid her father for a waggon. He was so much surprised that he kissed her several times in absence of mind, and talked of nothing else but kisses till he left her. But as he trotted away through the forest he forgot the girl sooner than his nature sometimes allowed him, and when he came to a rough wooden hut in the thickest of the underwood, he drank more than his share of the beer, and was surprised to find he had done it. His companion lost no time in informing him

'The devil! I wasn't thinking, Hans. Shut your lantern jaws. Galeazzo has been paying for a waggon! What in hell's name does that mean?'

'Paying? Paying, eh?' growled Hans; and the subject occupied them for some time.

That night there was some blackgame for sale in Galeazzo's camp which had come from the wooden hut in the thicket. Towards morning a man reeled through the camp and leered at the outposts with a drunken smile. But through all the day this drunken fool rode hard towards Duke Bernhard's camp, and the wiry little man and the tough little horse had little sleep till they brought him the news that Galeazzo was become a merchant in waggons.

In this manner the strategy of the Marquis Galeazzo fell among thieves; and the head thief, who was Duke Bernhard, took it to him lovingly, and made up his mind that it should be his own.

So, while the army of Galeazzo straggled in a long thin line through the forest with its waggons lurching at its tail, the van heard the crackle of musketry behind them, and the drivers of the waggons began to run and the horses to fall and kick and writhe. Then suddenly on the middle of the wavering line fell a storm of cavalry, and broke it, and turned and rode through it again. Galeazzo's men were struggling to form with sabres whistling about their ears, and heavy horses shouldering them down and trampling them. And the horsemen swung this way and that, and never a company could get itself together to meet them; and Zwicka's fat face grew redder, and he cursed and shouted his orders while the sweat dripped off his nose. Galeazzo's cavalry came hurrying back, riding down their own friends and tried to charge, and Zwicka let his men fall open before them. They came through the midst, and the musketeers gave them a double volley and Zwicka fell upon their rear. They broke and ran this way and that through the forest, and the army of the Marquis Galeazzo gave up the ghost. Bernhard flung his last squadrons at them as they fled, and rode up chuckling to Zwicka.

'Eh, my Zwicka, is it war?' he cried.

'Play, sir,' said Zwicka puffing, 'play.'

'Well, well, my Zwicka, you were getting fat,' said Bernhard patting his shoulder. 'Gott! you'll never be hotter till you're in hell!'

'Phew! I've made myself company, sir,' said Zwicka; and Bernhard chuckled again.

'My Zwicka is in spirits. Well, man, you have reason. It was very prettily done. Now we will burn these tokens of Galeazzo's honesty. Pity to burn the only things he ever paid for.'

They burnt Galeazzo's waggons, and so the ingenuity of the Marquis Galeazzo was brought to naught. Before nightfall Bernhard and his men were eight miles on their way back to Karl, and as Bernhard lay down for a few hours' sleep on the ground and rolled himself in his cloak :

'So: that's one,' he muttered and chuckled to himself.

CHAPTER XXV.

AN AMBASSADOR'S HONOUR.

'YES, your Excellency, that is what I always say,' said the Secretary of the Council; 'ask everybody's advice, and never take it—never take it. You must have heard me say that, my lady?'

'Oh, I have heard you say the same thing lots of times,' cried Amaryllis, and the Secretary laughed in his chest.

'Bad habits stick, my lady. Virtue is a habit, they tell us, and vice too.'

'Indeed, Doctor, you do yourself injustice,' said the Capuchin gravely; 'and I would sooner hear a thing that was worth saying said twice than many fresh things said that were not worth saying at all. Pardon me if I seem to refer to your Council.'

The Secretary's pleasant smile passed; all expression died from his face.

'I have not succeeded with the Council,' said the Capuchin thoughtfully. The Secretary eyed him for a moment.

'It is not your proposals they dislike. It is not your offers they fear. It is you—you—you,' said he. And then in a moment:

'Oh, but, Doctor, you were Karl's tutor,' cried Amaryllis. 'And I know you can do anything with the Council, so——'

'Karl's tutor?' said the Secretary breaking in. 'So I was; and much I did for him. Grammar—now, I was very strong in grammar. Karl—Karl never knew a word. Always did everything for himself. I did try to teach——'

'Oh, but we don't want to talk about grammar,' cried Amaryllis.

'You see, I must not talk of what you do want,' said the Secretary with a laugh. Just then Lormont came into the room.

He had hoped to find Amaryllis alone. As he turned to shut the door he smiled to himself.

‘Do I intrude on a council?’ The Secretary jumped up. It appeared to him that there was to be another assailant, and he had found two enough.

‘Letters to write, my lady, if you will pardon me. Never get done, your Excellency—never get done,’ and he shook his head and hurried out. Lormont, opening the door for him, bowed. Then he turned and bowed to the two others.

‘I trust I did not frighten the learned Doctor,’ said he.

‘It was done already,’ the Capuchin answered.

He looked from one to the other. ‘I—have no letters to write—and yet I will write them——’ he turned to go. ‘But do not let your news wait too long, Lormont.’

‘Indeed, it shall not wait at all,’ cried Amaryllis, but she held out her hand to Lormont and smiled at him. Lormont kissed it.

‘I am a faithful servant,’ he murmured.

‘For that I will answer,’ said the Capuchin. ‘Forgive me, Lady Amaryllis; we work to an end you also desire.’

‘I have nothing to forgive,’ cried Amaryllis, and she made them a curtsy.

‘But it would be well to practise,’ said Lormont as he went out; and Amaryllis fell to work on her gloves.

‘You travel fast, Lormont,’ said the Capuchin.

‘Bad news does, sir.’

‘Ah, you have only your own story to tell?’ said the Capuchin quickly.

‘I believe you will find it enough, sir. I made my bid and the thing was not for sale.’

‘I suppose—that—is bad news,’ said the Capuchin slowly.

‘You mean—he would not come back by our aid.’

‘So he said: I think he will come back in honour or not at all. *Cordieu*, sir, if it were I, I should say the same,’ cried Lormont.

‘Is there loss of honour in being wiser than fools?’

‘Yes, that is what I said to myself; in another way I said it to him. Eh, it did not convince him! I do not know that it convinces me.’

‘Yet you call it bad news?’

‘I call it bad news; because I think there is worse to hear. If he does come back, sir, we shall have no more army from

Solgau.' The Capuchin looked up quickly. 'No, he did not say it. I think he was too wise; and I—it is possible that I was too much his friend to trap him into saying it—but it was clear enough. And then——?' said Lormont slowly, looking at the Capuchin.

'The Count of Erbach would be a faithful friend,' said Père Joseph.

'Beyond doubt, if he could be. But how to make him? The thing he wants is the thing we cannot give.' But Père Joseph sat silent drumming with his fingers on the table. 'Even you, sir——' said Lormont, and looked at the Capuchin; but he still sat silent.

'Ah, honest men are dear,' said Lormont again with a sigh.

'And not always worth buying,' said the Capuchin; 'they ask too much and give too little,' and he looked at Lormont.

'Am I to answer you, sir?' said Lormont. 'Then I will have another maxim: the best friends are not bought. You give them much, ask nothing, receive more. But what is it all to the purpose? We want Solgau for an ally, Karl of Erbach wants peace. He will do nothing for us: we can do nothing for him. It is sad: these honest men with brains trouble us poor creatures who lack the honesty. But hard things, sir, are not for you to do, of course.'

'So you give up all hope, Lormont?' said the Capuchin.

'After you, sir,' said Lormont, with a trace of a smile. 'There is also Karl himself.'

But the Capuchin did not answer. He rose and paced up and down the room.

'The mill goes round, Lormont, and we think we move it; and the car rolls on and we think we guide it; but the power is not ours, and the road is not always the road we choose.'

'And often it ends in a bog,' said Lormont, with a wave of his hand, but the Capuchin did not heed him.

'The wheel drags sometimes, or the road seems to end, and we cannot bring the stream back to turn our wheel as it used and we cannot find a road over the mountains, but if we look we find a pass at last, and if we work for it we may bring another stream to do the work of the stream that is dry.' Lormont smiled.

'Then we are to work still?' said he. The Capuchin sat down.

'You saw the Secretary. Did it occur to you that we were a strange company?'

'I would congratulate yourself and the Secretary on your taste and your fortune,' said Lormont.

'He is a friend of the Count of Erbach.'

'Ah, he was sitting between you and the Lady Amaryllis,' said Lormont. 'He probably found it simpler to agree with you.'

'He tells me that I frighten the Council. They will not be guided by me lest it be said that I guided them.'

'The Council's reputation must be maintained,' said Lormont. 'They are said to be guided by nothing but fools; and that seems likely; they guide themselves.'

'He would promise us nothing,' said the Capuchin. 'But there was no need. And the man knows men,' he paused. 'And so, Lormont, I shall work still.' And he paused again. 'Just as you would have me,' he said slowly with a smile.

'I have always said, sir, Karl is a man. Real men make good friends.'

'And real men are loved, are they not, Lormont?' said the Capuchin quietly, with a glance at the door.

'You treat a discredited ambassador well,' said Lormont, and he rose quickly. 'I will tell her—as an example.' And the Comte de Lormont lost no time. But the Capuchin, left alone, sat still looking at the ground.

'He is the only man,' he said slowly. 'There must be a way.'

But in all the hours through which he had thought of it he had not found one. Still, that afternoon he rode out from Solgau with a scanty guard to meet one of his suite, Brulart de Léon, and send him back to Richelieu.

Lormont came quickly into the room where Amaryllis sat.

'And how is your arm?' she said at once without looking up; she was very busy with the gloves. Lormont took Amaryllis and her gloves and her needles and her silk all into his arms.

'Why I think two do it better,' said he, and he looked into her eyes before he kissed her.

'Indeed, one did very well,' said Amaryllis. 'They are really just the same eyes, monsieur.'

'That gentleman is an intruder. If the Lady Amaryllis would be good enough to desire him to withdraw.'

'Oh, have you had enough?' cried Amaryllis, leaning back in his arms.

'But with monsieur looking on.'

'Oh, he does more than look on,' cried Amaryllis and paused for a moment. 'He looks. I think he looks at my heart,' and

the eyes that hid themselves from Lormont were wet. He kissed her waving fragrant hair.

'Why, he gave his own for it,' he said; and again he kissed her hair; 'and beyond doubt it is the best hair in all the world, but it is only hair, Peach-blossom, and there are other things.'

She gave him her lips to be kissed.

'You are sure you have earned them?'

'I shall never do that, my lady,' said Lormont softly; 'and now I come back to you a poor discredited ambassador who has failed.' He handed her to the window seat and sat beside her.

'A miserable failure,' he said and shook his head.

'So very miserable?' said Amaryllis softly, slipping her arm through his and taking his hand.

'Why, there it is!' cried Lormont. 'I have failed and I ought to be miserable; but the same eyes look at me, Amaryllis, and the same little hand is here——'

'Where should it be?' said Amaryllis quickly. 'Was Père Joseph unkind, Léon?'

'No; the good father in his own way was nearly as kind as you, little girl. I think the good man must have found something in me to like; he does study men deeply.'

'Oh, but that is a sneer at me, too,' cried Amaryllis. 'I will not have it, monsieur!'

'That man again!' groaned Lormont. 'Do forget him.'

'Indeed, I would if you would let me,' she cried.

'There is here a poor fool called Léon, who will kiss your little shoes and be proud. But, monsieur—why, I dare say he would not look at you twice.'

'The monsieur that I knew,' said Amaryllis thoughtfully, 'he jumped into a pool for my dog and he told me fibs to make me hold his hand; indeed, I do not think he did look at me twice—it was just once—all the time.'

'There was a man, Lady Brown-eyes,' said Lormont kissing them, 'who promised you something; was that monsieur?'

'That was the ambassador!' cried Amaryllis.

'Another of them!' said Lormont. 'Are you not ashamed?'

'Not even a little,' said Amaryllis; 'and they all kiss me.'

'Ah, yes; so you must have many,' said Lormont; 'so here is for all.'

'Please, please, not all together!' cried Amaryllis in a moment. 'Please, Léon!'

'Yes, he is the man to call,' said Lormont quietly. 'But, my

lady, I promised you something ; will you tell me again what it was ?'

'And do you forget ?' said Amaryllis.

'I promised to help Karl of Erbach for the sake of a little girl who looked up at me and said——'

'Ah, you knew before I said it,' said Amaryllis softly, looking up at him again with the loving wistful eyes that had told him her love and her sister's. 'Yes, and that was what you promised.'

'I did not forget, my lady ; but will you tell me what it means ?'

'You know they talk of making him Prince, but they will not do it ; and he would be so good a Prince. You promised to help him to come back in honour, and this is the way, Léon.'

'Yes, I was afraid I had promised that,' said Lormont slowly.

'Oh, you are not sorry ? I know it is hard.'

'There is only one easy thing I would care to promise you, my lady,' said Lormont, and she knew what that was. 'But if Karl is to be Prince I think he must win the place himself.' He paused for a moment and then, as he looked at her, he began to smile. 'Well, the ambassador has his honour. I can only tell you I have done nothing ; and yet that is not all true. One thing I can tell you, and you shall say if it is nothing. I told Karl that there was more than one lady in Rosenberg who held him in regard. He was surprised ; but I think it will make him long to come back to a high place in Solgau.'

'I knew he did not know,' said Amaryllis quickly. 'Ah, Léon, and you said you had done nothing.'

'Why, what is it ? To give a man a message from a girl.'

"To give a man a message from a girl," Amaryllis repeated, and she laughed softly. 'Oh, indeed, that is nothing—quite nothing.'

'I think it is because there are two brown eyes that would make even me work that I can believe you are right,' said Lormont. 'But, my lady, you must not be happy too soon. There is little done yet, and what is to do next I cannot see. Oh, I promised,' he said quickly, seeing her frightened look, 'and I will not fail when a chance comes, but there is much water to flow under the bridge before you see Karl a Prince in Solgau. But we are puzzled—I am puzzled.'

'Ah, I know,' said Amaryllis softly. 'There is you and Karl.'

'You might say : "there is Karl" ; and—there may be I,' said Lormont. 'But the ambassador's honour is pledged, my lady.'

'Oh, yes,' cried Amaryllis, and she slipped quickly off the seat, holding his hand and knelt and kissed it. 'There is an honour for the ambassador!' But for once she gave Lormont pain.

'My lady, that must not be!' he cried sharply, and he lifted her. 'You make me ashamed.'

'But indeed I meant it,' said Amaryllis softly in his arms.

CHAPTER XXVI.

OF THE WAYS OF LUDWIG.

PRINCE LUDWIG had taken a side openly at last, when there was only one side left for him to take; and for all that he had no title to Solgau now that Dorothea lay under the beeches at Waldkirch, a new cloud of schemes was floating in his brain. If he had no title at least he knew that no one else had a better, and Prince Ludwig, who was not wont to underrate himself, had now determined that he would join with Galeazzo; together they would crush Bernhard and the sullen fool who hated him and was afraid to strike at him for all the harm he had done Solgau. Yet most of all he longed for revenge—that was the name his thoughts gave it—on three men: Turenne, through whom Dorothea had been killed, and now Ludwig could nearly believe that Turenne had killed her; the Capuchin, who had made him an enemy without any cause that would have weighed with Prince Ludwig; and Lormont, the drawling fop who had insulted a man that could not defend himself. Perhaps he did not believe that he was in the right, for that in Prince Ludwig's mind was taken for granted, without thought; but he did believe that all who opposed him were in the wrong, and he was quite sure that all his enemies were either knaves or fools, and most of them both.

So in a happy mood Prince Ludwig set himself to gather an army about Wolfach, which lies hard by the hills in the south of Lichtenstein.

Now, at Wolfach there dwelt then a maid, and she lived all alone, for her father died fighting for his Prince, and her mother long ago, when she was still a babe. There, one April morning in the streets of Wolfach (so he tells it from whom I had the tale), she came from the woods, a big bunch of violets in her hand, a

very lovely maid. Her name was Erna. Swinging down the street with an easy lilted stride, their hats cocked jauntily, the sunlight flashing on their silver sword-hilts, arm in arm, joking together, marched two Englishmen, soldiers both. They saw the maid, and one of them (his blood was hotter, perhaps) marked her light step, the proud poise of her head, and her dark crown of hair. But both together swept off their hats, and, bowing, gave her greeting. She smiled at them, and then she blushed, for she felt that one of them knew she was a very lovely maid.

Because the devil who cared for Prince Ludwig would have it so, he came riding down the street with a score of his guards. He, too, saw Erna; he, too, saw that she was very beautiful, and his little eyes grew bigger, I fancy, as he looked. But he passed on and said something in a low voice to one of his guards. The man smiled, turned in his saddle, and looked back at Erna.

But the Englishmen went on to their inn, and when they were come to the big room over the porch one of them lit his pipe and said:

‘So that is their great Prince, Lance.’

‘And very like a weazel he is, Dick.’

‘Why, so he is! Now Gustavus, he was a god; and old Lesly, he was a devil; and Bernhard, why he is at least a man; but this fellow—he looks like a dirty fox, and his eyes wobble all ways. Yet, body o’ me, he gets ten thousand men about him!’

Lancelot did not answer; he sat himself down in the window seat, and looked out at the budding chestnut.

‘I tell thee, Lance, let us go ride with Bernhard,’ cried Dick. Still Lancelot said nothing. ‘Well, which is it, man, ay or no?’ and he clapped his friend on the shoulder.

‘What was it you said, Dick?’ said Lance.

‘Body o’ me! Here is a man! I talk to him wisely for halt an hour—tell him of all the chiefs in Germany—give him all my ten years’ learning of war—and the fool looks up in my face and lisps like a child of three, “What is it, Dick dear?” Body o’ me, what is it, Lance? Have ye met with a witch, or lost your wits, or found a maid to love?’

‘Why, you saw her too!’ said Lance.

‘Her? What? The maid in the street? Lord love all fools! I have seen her a dozen times, and so have you, Master Calf.’

‘So I have,’ said Lance; ‘and each time she is lovelier.’

‘Oh, the devil’s in it!’ cried Dick. ‘So this is why we dilly-

dally here! "Shall we join the weasel?" say I. "Perhaps," says the babe. "Will you ride with Bernhard?" I ask. "Let us wait," says Master Lance. Oh Lance, Lance, so we stay here and study the ways of Master Ludwig all for a maid with two eyes and a nose.'

'Give me three days, Dick,' said Lance.

'Three days, say ye? And what will Master Lance do with three days? By the God of fools, would you marry the maid and keep a shop or till a farm? Lord, grant me to see Rittmaster Lance at a plough's tail!'

'I shall find a way,' said Lance quietly. Dick looked at him.

'Body o' me, if you say it like that, I think you will. How many mad things have I done with you, Master Lance, since we fell on Wallenstein from the west gate of Stralsund town? And now to think you'll marry a girl!' He paused for a moment puffing at his pipe; then from out of a cloud of smoke he said gruffly, 'Humph! so here it ends!'

Lancelot caught his hand and gripped it hard.

'Never that, Dick,' he said softly.

About Wolfach Prince Ludwig gathered all the strength of Lichtenstein together, and much that was not of Lichtenstein at all, but ready to follow any man who would pay, and for choice among such men a man who was not too scrupulous. It was no small force that lay in his camp near the hills, and Prince Ludwig, seeing it grow, became more sure of himself and his schemes. And all this time the two Englishmen, grown wise by hard training in the midst of war, watched the great array, and if they sneered sometimes, if Dick grew more distrustful day by day, doubtless it was because they had been bred in a different school. For Ludwig's forces grew bigger, and he made agreement with the Marquis Galeazzo to meet him on the borders of Lichtenstein. He was aiming for the crown of Solgau still; but for all he knew that Père Joseph had stayed long at Solgau, had ridden suddenly away northward, had met Brulart de Léon at Hilpertsee, he did not trouble to think what it might mean. He heard that Turenne was hunting down his false Pappenheimers along the border of Solgau, and sneered at the man for a fool. Turenne might hang them all in a row, and it was nothing to Ludwig; they had grown far beyond his power to control, as his servants sometimes did. They had harried both sides of the border, Lichtenstein and Solgau alike, and if Turenne would crush them Ludwig was much obliged to the fool who had murdered his wife. But Turenne, in

the saddle night and day, hunting them down like vermin, had no notion of pleasing Ludwig, though he might have known that Ludwig cared nothing for a man who had served his turn.

So without a thought of what these men were doing on whom he must be revenged, Ludwig turned to the war. But Prince Ludwig did not prepare for war as Bernhard, or Karl, or Zwicka. He was anxious only for a great force, and he gave great promises and a little pay, and talked to his soldiers of plundering the fat lands of Solgau, and bowed when they cheered him. His men seldom cheered Zwicka; certainly when they did he swore at them. It never came into anyone's head that Karl of Erbach would care to be cheered. But Prince Ludwig was proud of such confidence. Sometimes in the background two tall Englishmen looked at the motley array and grinned at each other.

That April day waned towards evening; the sun set rosily behind the dark western woods, paled, and was gone. In the gloom Lancelot Onslow and Dick Zouch took their evening walk; nor was it chance (as some of you will be very sure), nor was it chance that led them past Erna's door. Then the soft night air was rent asunder by a sudden shriek; one word only the Englishmen heard as they ran down the lane.

'Never,' cried Erna, 'never!'

The door of her cottage was flung wide; they saw her by the faint candlelight struggling in two men's arms, and Dick Zouch laughed aloud and he cried:

'Dagger and sword—I'm with you, Lance!'

Four men there were in the hut, and they had scarce time to draw their swords before the English were on them, one man mad with the lust of fight and the other aflame with love. It was no long struggle; in the little room with its wooden walls was no space to shun the first onset, and in the first onset that fight was won. So, very soon, Dick Zouch sat himself on the table and wiped his sword, and he looked at Lance and Erna:

'Body o' me, the Prince's Guard,' said he.

Lance, with Erna's hand in his, looked in her face; she dropped her eyes, and her cheeks flushed very dark.

'They said—they came to take me—for him,' she said in a low voice. Dick Zouch whistled. Lance pressed her hand; he drew her closer and whispered:

'Lady, will you trust me?' She lifted her head; her honest dark eyes looked into his, as a man's gaze meets his friend's.

'Yes, sir,' said Erna; and Lancelot kissed her hand.

'I will be true,' he said; then he turned on his heel and cried: 'Dick, here is our choice made for us. No place for us now in Wolfach! Let us ride to-night for Bernhard's men at the Schwartzsee!'

Dick Zouch said never a word. He walked to the door and peered out into the darkness.

'There be horses five, and one is saddled for a maid,' said he.

So that night they galloped out of Wolfach, and through the darkness they rode towards the castle of the Schwartzsee. The soft spring breeze stirred in the forest as Lance and Erna rode side by side; hardly a word they said, only once or twice in the darkness their eyes met, but each felt a joy that was new as they rode through the darkness, man and maid. An owl screeched, a wolf howled far away, the trees whispered together over their heads as they rode on southward with the stars for their guide. At last the sky in the east grew lighter, the pale gold light of dawn shimmered through the budding trees. Lance's hand sought her bridle, his bare hand fell on hers, and she looked up in his face and smiled. Then as the sky grew brighter Dick Zouch spurred forward from fifty yards behind.

'Master Lance,' he cried, 'man and beast must sleep, and by now I think we are safe.'

'Ay, Dick; it will be well to rest, Erna,' said Lance.

'Yes, Lance,' said the maid.

They turned aside and rode down to a little glade where the trees rise out of bare grey rock over which the water falls. There they sprang from their horses, the two men and the maid. About their feet the violets clustered thick, with a primrose shining pale among them here and there. The horses stretched their necks and nosed into the grass. Lance held out his hand to Erna:

'Erna, you came from Wolfach a maid; so, if you will it so, shall you come to Schwartzsee. But I love you, Erna. If you will come to Schwartzsee my wife, I pledge my honour you shall never grieve for the day you rode from Wolfach with me.' Erna did not answer. Then Dick Zouch came forward and took her hand in his.

'And for his honour, Lady Erna, my honour,' said he, and in a moment he let her hand fall.

Erna's pure eyes sought Lance's, and all was silent in the glade but for the splash of water and a thrush's song. Erna put her little hand in Lance's.

'Ay, and mine,' said she. So they washed in the brook, and they made a meal in the glade, of bread and meat and a flask of wine, and then they slept on the violets. But Dick Zouch lay by the forest path and his sword was drawn at his side. In the evening they woke and rode on to the Schwartzsee, and Lance and Erna went hand in hand.

It was three mornings after when they drew near to the little hamlet that lies below the castle of the Schwartzsee, and there, riding with his wife, they met the Baron Hildebrand. The Baron Hildebrand reined up sharply :

'Now, who may you be, gentlemen?' said he.

'Now, why should we tell you?' said Lance.

'Because you come out of Lichtenstein,' said the Baron.

'Now, unless all men lie, Baron Hildebrand, you have done the like yourself.'

'So you know my name?' cried the Baron.

'And your fame,' quoth Dick with a bow.

'Therefore have we come to join your force,' said Lance quickly. The Baron looked them up and down, and he saw they were very proper men.

'Ay, ay; and the maid?' he growled.

'Here is no maid, Baron,' said Lance.

'How?' cried Baron Hildebrand.

'But, before God, a wife,' said Lance very quietly, and Erna looked proudly at the Baron and blushed. The Baron chuckled :

'Ay, ay; and before men?' said he. Lance's eyes flashed.

'For the gentleman that denies it, Baron, I am his most humble servant,' he cried.

Dick Zouch shook his head gravely :

'And may the Lord have mercy on his sinful soul,' said he.

'God save us all! here are fire-eaters,' cried the Baron. But the Baroness rode forward and laid her hand on Erna's arm.

'You are very beautiful, dear,' said she.

'We have been at Wolfach a month, Baron. We have seen all Ludwig's force—and a force of footpads it is. All this can we tell you. And my wife, the Lady Erna, we took from Wolfach.' Lance lowered his voice. 'You know Ludwig, Baron?' said he. The Baron nodded.

'You are very welcome, gentlemen——' he began, but his wife broke in.

'And I trust you will honour me at our castle,' said she.

And this is how the Prince Ludwig dealt by his people, by the children of those who died to serve him ; and, as it happens, this also is how full news of Ludwig's army came to the Marshal of Solgau.

That night in the castle of the Schwartzsee, when the ladies had gone, a song was sung that Dick Zouch had made ; and in English it sounds like this :—

Pandarus he was a lusty blade
(Sing hey for the dagger that stabbed him !)
Pandarus he was agog for a maid
(Sing ho for the devil that grabbed him !)

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE FAIRIES OF THE SCHWARTZSEE.

ON the day that he and Galeazzo had chosen, Prince Ludwig began his march. Then he learnt that Bernhard had gone to meet Galeazzo, and he pressed on to crush the little force that was left. He began the long ascent up the winding road through the hills. He came into touch with Karl's outposts and they fell back. Ludwig pressed on the more eagerly, up and up till the trees grew scantier, and the bare rocks stood gaunt on either side. Still Karl's men fell back, and Ludwig, sure of himself and sure of his greater force, pushed on to crush the little army that did not dare meet him. Karl, watching him from a hill-top, who knew from Dick and Lance what manner of men made up this force, fell back further still. Then one morning Ludwig's scouts rode in to tell him that scarcely a thousand men barred the way. He could see their pikes glittering on the highest peak before him. He had come to the summit of the pass where the gap in the mountains widens and the Schwartzsee lies glittering dark and deep. When this scanty company was crushed the road lay clear down to the plains and the forest, where he was to join Galeazzo. Ludwig told his men as much ; they had only to crush a handful of peasants from Solgau and the war was half done. It would be a pleasant morning's game. Ludwig's faithful soldiers shouted lustily in confident answer.

The attack was begun ; Ludwig's cannon thundered away at the hillside, and never a gun answered them. Two regiments of the men of Lichtenstein advanced, began to climb the steep,

smooth slope, and were halfway up, when three tongues of red fire belched forth from the grey rocks, and a storm of spreading bullets tore through their ranks. They broke and ran, and all down the hillside the guns ploughed furrows through the struggling crowd. Again Ludwig's cannon spoke, and shot was hailed on the grey hillside and his own wounded men, while the guns of Solgau answered only fitfully and fell at last to silence. More men were coming up; the little basin in the hills grew thick with Ludwig's army; and a new attack was tried. On three different sides a regiment was to climb the hill. The guns met them again and drove them back on one side, but by the other steeper paths still Ludwig's men pressed on, for there were but few to meet them, and they were ashamed to fail. Musket fire met them as they scrambled over the rocks, a fire that flung dead men down on their comrades' heads, and rolled dead and living over the steep sharp crags together. Still some strove on till the long pikes met them and pushed them writhing down. On the hilltop Karl of Erbach stood, and he gave few glances to the men who were struggling more feebly now against the pikes and the muskets of the men he had chosen to bar Ludwig's way. His eyes were on Ludwig's army crowding together in the narrow space, and he saw that no more were coming up the narrow road round the bluff shoulder of the hill over against the castle. He turned sharply to a gunner:

'The signal!' he cried, and one gun was fired thrice.

The Lichtensteiners were straggling back in disorder, and they surged to and fro in the narrow space. All around the hills burst into flame. From front and flank and rear shot tore through Ludwig's men. They tried to turn their guns to meet it, but every way was a storm of death. They ran this way and that, and no man heeded the few orders that came. The dark smoke hung about the hills and the cannon thundered on, and the sound came booming back loud and deep over the curses and shrieks and groans in the bloody mangled mob, that fought to get out of the death-trap where they were caught. Trampling one another under foot, stabbing their comrades in the back, they struggled to reach the narrow pass by which they had come. And still the cannon roared, tearing gaps of death among them as they strove madly each for his own life. A row of men were blasted to the ground, and those behind sprang forward treading on them, only to find their fate. Dashing madly down the hillside where the narrow pass begins came Karl's handful of horse and broke

through and rode back again. Behind them musketeers ran down and lay behind the rocks firing across the narrow road. Soon, while the horsemen straggled back to shelter, a gun came lumbering down, and pikemen and musketeers formed about it and the gun swept the roadway clear. The sun rose high and pierced the rolling clouds of smoke shining hot on the helpless wretches Prince Ludwig had led to crush the Marshal of Solgau. And the Marshal of Solgau stood grim and silent while the work went on. A man came out from the crowd waving a white flag frantically, and ran towards the hill where Karl stood. Karl gave a sharp order to his gunners; on his hill the guns were silent, and the man ran wildly on, still waving his flag.

'Stop it, in God's name, stop it!' he shrieked. 'We surrender.'

'Where is Prince Ludwig?' cried Karl.

'Run, sir. Stop it, for God's sake, stop it!' But Karl muttered an oath.

'Lay down your arms in the middle and march there!' He pointed to a place between two of the hills where his guns stood. 'Is there room?'

'There's room now,' muttered the man, and he ran back shouting to his fellows. They ran herding together like sheep and crowded into the narrow space. Slowly the guns fell to silence all round, and slowly the thick clouds of smoke rolled away, and the sun shone down hot on the dying and the dead, and men crawled to drink the water of the Schwartzsee, lapping it in their hands, though now it was turbid and thick. The men of Solgau on the hilltops were laughing and shouting.

Soon a man came galloping up from the other side of the hills, halted a few hundred yards away, and stood up in his stirrups peering forward, shading his eyes with his hand. He rode nearer, stopped and looked again. Then suddenly he tore off his hat and waved it round his head.

'Solgau, Solgau!' he shouted, galloping on. He saw Karl talking to his officers on the hillside, and cried:

'Duke Bernhard is coming, sir; and we have smashed Ludwig, sir?'

'You may tell Duke Bernhard you have seen the army of Lichtenstein,' said Karl quietly, and the man saluted, turned, and rode off laughing.

Then a little later came Duke Bernhard, riding hard, with only a few men about him, and as he came between the hills he

looked round at the men on them, and then at the dead, and at the listless crowd of living, and chuckled till he shook in his saddle.

‘This is war, Karl!’ he cried. ‘Gott! this is war.’

And Karl, turning, said quietly:

‘Ludwig has escaped.’

‘Gott! is that all you can say? I never saw a prettier fight. Man, you ought to have been a soldier. Gustavus himself, Karl. How many escaped?’

‘Perhaps three hundred,’ said Karl.

‘Three hundred? God in heaven! and they were three to one. Now, we beat the ingenious Galeazzo, but some of him got away.’

‘Ah, Galeazzo is not a fool,’ said Karl.

‘Why that is true. But—eh, what? Did Ludwig pass that gun?’ and he pointed to the gun that was brought forward to clear the roadway. Karl told him the story, and Bernhard nodded gravely.

‘You have little to learn, Karl. And I was fool enough to tell you not to fight. Gott! you will never sing your own praises, but I will for you. And I am a very sweet singer, Karl. Sang psalms to Gustavus. Well——’ he paused, and looked keenly at Karl, ‘I suppose you would be after Ludwig?’

‘I should like to catch Ludwig,’ said Karl through his teeth, and Bernhard chuckled.

‘Gott! so should I. But you have earned the right. Well, I suppose your horsemen are fresh—take them and catch him. But they are few enough. I will send Zwicka after you. Catch him, in God’s name if you can, but don’t risk yourself, for—well, for the sake of the girl.’

‘There is little to fear in Ludwig,’ said Karl.

‘Oh, rats bite—in a corner,’ said Bernhard. ‘The luck is with you, Karl.’

And Karl, with fifty or sixty horsemen, rode away to catch the Prince without an army, while Brulart de Léon galloped hard nearer and nearer Paris, and the Capuchin travelled slowly back to Solgau. But of these things Karl knew nothing. For all he said little to Bernhard, he smiled to himself as he rode along thinking how the fairies had caught Ludwig by the black lake; and also he remembered that now there was something for those ladies in Rosenberg to hear who wished him well.

(To be continued.)

At the Sign of the Ship.

TWO versions of the Humbert mystery are before the English public, Mr. O'Connor's *Phantom Millions*¹ and another in the *Idler*. Both appear to be based mainly on articles in the French newspapers and on accounts of the sham litigations with the non-existent Crawfords. The newspapers must contain a good deal of excited gossip, and must be coloured by political prejudice. The two most enigmatic figures are the Man in the Top Hat, the father of Madame Humbert (*née* Daurignac), and M. Gustave Humbert, the distinguished Minister and father of Madame Humbert's husband. I call Daurignac the 'Man in the Top Hat' because in that headpiece and a frockcoat, a costume unusual and inappropriate, he tended his vineyard from 1855 onward. Who was he? How did he get 3,000*l.* to buy his vineyard? He was a Saint-Germain on a small and vulgar scale, dropping down from nobody knows where, and telling queer tales of his past history. 'I am now poor, but I shall one day be rich,' he used to say; and somehow or other he seems to have possessed Government bonds, which are said to have been actually beheld of men. This transient and embarrassed phantom in a top hat corresponds to the *Iolair Dearg*, the Red Eagle, the father of the Sobieski Stuarts. He was a mystery behind the Royal claims of these gentlemen, and he lived in lodgings in Clerkenwell. Now, Cagliostro's parents were easily traced, poor people with no mystery about them; but the Man in the Top Hat, like the *Iolair*, is a riddle. He is complicated by the eminent Gustave Humbert, the austere Republican, the Senator of low birth, of good education, of an Agnostic Nonconformist conscience, exercising chief jurisdiction, says Mr. O'Connor, 'over all questions affecting judicial institutions, public or private.' Now, Miss Daurignac, who married the son of this incorruptible ideal *bourgeois*, was from the first a very bad girl, one of those (they are not scarce) who invent an invisible lover for themselves and

¹ Arrowsmith.

an engagement. She was plain, and had a Semitic aspect, and no education, and a horrible accent ; while the Man in the Top Hat, a triple of a medium or white witch, reflected no glory on his children.

* * *

Now, this is the central mystery. Why, did the Senatorial and Ministerial Humbert, with his broad, bland, pawky white face and white whiskers, marry his two sons and one daughter to the two daughters and one son of the seedy and dilapidated vintager in the top hat? It appears that Madame Humbert, *mère*, says that she made the central marriage beguiled by Miss Daurignac's tale of a legacy of 12,000*l.* That is all very well, but she knew what kind of maiden Miss Daurignac was, she recognised her mendacity, and yet a regular alliance was made between the two families—the other two young Humberts wedding the other two young Daurignacs, Madame Humbert well and duly knowing what sort of daughter-in-law she had drawn in her poetic Frédéric's wife. How can this alliance be explained? We cannot translate the relative positions of the Humberts and Daurignacs into English terms. We have nothing in social life and in politics at all analogous to Gustave Humbert, a kind of idealised legal Peer for Life, at the head of the judicial administration, yet honourably poor and pure as the consecrated snow that lies on Dian's lap, or rather on the lap of Republican Themis. Nor can we find any akin to the mystic agriculturist in the frockcoat. Bankrupt farmers we have many a one, but none who is of lofty lineage 'kep' out of their own,' practising as a white witch, wearing a top hat, and intermarrying all round with transcendent Ministerial functionaries. How in the world could the thing occur? It was all very well for Madame Humbert to think she was getting 12,000*l.* for her Frédéric, and therefore to find him a wife of the shadiest character and shabbiest associations. The victims of her sort do not deserve much pity ; they all expected to make a good thing out of young Madame Humbert's visionary legacies—fairy tales which no Briton would swallow. But why marry the rest of the Humberts to the rest of the shabby Daurignacs? There can be no explanation which will clear the rigid Minister of being a discreditable dupe at the best ; of thinking he knew of a good thing, in the financial sense of 'good.'

* * *

The writers in the *Idler* hold that the immaculate Gustave was at the bottom of the whole business; that he, for a bribe of 20,000*l.*, arrested the chief of the Union Générale, an anti-Semitic *bien né, bien pensant* financial association, which thereon came down with a crash, burying many a fashionable speculator, crushed, like Samson's Philistines, in the interests of the Hebrews. Mr. O'Connor, with much generosity, declines to think so ill of the rigid Minister. But Madame Humbert, daughter of the immaculate one, did sell to a M. B——, for 60,000*l.*, a free pardon for his son, who was sentenced to two years' imprisonment as a deserter from the army. 'She was powerful with the Government of France' twenty years ago, when her father-in-law was in office. M. B—— got his money back, Madame Humbert borrowing it from new victims, whom she did not repay. It does not look well—it looks very black—for the rigid Minister. Conceivably in the marriages and the affair of the pardon he was only the dupe of that consummate wheedler, his daughter-in-law. But he was her stalking-horse; his icy radiance enveloped her in a halo; yet his wife had already found her out: so she is reported to say. If an honest dupe, Gustave Humbert as far outshines Cardinal Rohan in the Affair of the Diamond Necklace as Madame Humbert eclipses Jeanne de la Mothe Valois. To be sure, Madame Humbert somehow, though a pillar of pious charity bazaars (like Lady Crawley), did not drag a Cardinal into the mud, and seems to have failed to smirch even a foreign crown. She did not go further than staining the domestic ermine. But then Madame Humbert was not beautiful, nor a daughter of kings; she had no queen to destroy; she had not the chances of the Valois lady. In England or America her particular sort of fable, the romantic legacy, would have found 'no takers,' though many obscure Americans believe in their own illustrious English descent and rights of inheritance. But nobody will lend them a cent on these securities. Mr. R. L. Stevenson in childhood believed in a sugar island, the rightful heritage of his house. It would be a bankrupt property now, but he was of imagination all compact. Similar dreams haunt the Irish peasantry, Mr. O'Connor says, and the French seem to have this touch of Celtic poetry. Financiers swallowed the myth of Robert Crawford without ever thinking of making inquiry as to whether such a 'multi-millionaire' of ancient Presbyterian descent had been heard of in America. What an extraordinary want of the historic sense is here displayed! Crawford is a good and ancient name, Crawford was a millionaire, the American Embassy

at Paris must have heard of Crawford, but nobody inquired. By some legal juggle (ah! where was Gustave then?) Crawford's existence was got into a document, and that document was a *chose jugée*, an axiom of Euclid, a thing that you could not go behind in legal proceedings. But new victims were always coming in fresh and gay, and they never asked an American of note 'Have you heard of an eccentric American millionaire, Mr. Robert Crawford?' Nor have I ever heard that any American in Paris voluntarily gave the Crawford myth away, explaining that he was even as Mrs. Harris. No Betsy Prig expressed a conviction that there 'never was no such person.' Perhaps this reticence was due to the keen national sense of humour.

* . *

I myself am concerned about a possible Crawford or Mrs. Harris, a certain Babby Mettlan (or Maitland), who, according to the Ettrick Shepherd, was housekeeper to the first (Anderson) laird of Tushielaw, in Ettrick, and was the source whence came Hogg's knowledge of the disputed ballads of *Auld Maitland*. A sceptic boldly denies that there was any Babby Mettlan. But Babby was 'other than a gude ane,' the laird of Tushielaw was also 'other than a gude ane,' and in trouble often with the minister and Kirk Session of Ettrick, probably with precious Mr. Boston, author of *The Crook in the Lot*. So Babby may well have sat on the stool of penance, and my course is clear. I may find Babby in the parish register or Kirk Session's records of Ettrick, wherein I mean to make a search. If one is obliged to do this on the chance of clearing Hogg's character to a slight extent, and of finding a real Babby Mettlan (to assert a negative without inquiry is hardly scientific), much more, one thinks, would a capitalist prove the existence of Crawford before lending a cent on the security of his alleged will. Clearly these capitalists needed training in historical inquiry or Psychical Research, which needs to sift evidence very minutely.

* . *

Mr. O'Connor, or his printer, also ought to have a care for history. Madame Humbert had valuable old furniture. 'Some of the woodwork came from the hand of Jean Gougou, and was done for Diane de Poitiers, and actually bore his arms.' Diane de

Poitiers, that famous leader, bore 'argent, a dexter sinople, on a bend wavy, and a crescent of the first.' Under this banner he broke the English square at Beaugé, captured Talbot at Pathay, and, in the moment of victory, was struck down beside the gallant Coligny at Jarnac. Or, if Diane did not do all that, are the arms those of 'Jean Gougon,' an artist unknown to me by that name? Had cabinet-makers arms, and would a cabinet-maker put his own arms (those of Gougon) on a coffer for Diane de Poitiers? Or has the printer put 'Gougon' for 'Goujon,' and 'his' for 'her'? If so, being accustomed to such typographical eccentricities, I condole tenderly with Mr. O'Connor.

* * *

The abominable atrocities committed by our brutal and licentious soldiery in South Africa have drawn on us not only the denunciations of 'the beggar who kept the cordite down,' but of the eloquent German Press. 'Methods of barbarism!' cried Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, echoed by the gentle enthusiasts of the Fatherland. But when anybody else tries a barbarian touch—say, massacres 2,000 prisoners in cold blood—that is quite another pair of sleeves. The late Colonel Yorck von Wachtenburg wrote a learned work, rendered into English under the title of *Napoleon as a General*.¹ Napoleon, as we know, deliberately massacred a number of prisoners at Jaffa. He gave different numbers at different times; he was not a very consistent narrator of his own exploits, but Count Yorck von Wachtenburg puts the figure (vol. i. p. 144) at about 2,000. To us English, of course, Napoleon's action seems natural, indeed congenial. It is the kind of thing, however, that the Germans, as a rule, reprobate. Not so Count Yorck von Wachtenburg, who writes: 'In the eyes of mere didactic historical writers this deed may appear horrible and revolting, but practical military history must not consider it as such. The safety of one's own army . . . must outweigh all other considerations. If such an act is necessary for the safety of one's own army, it is not only justified, but its repetition in any future war would be advisable, and no convention could alter this fact.' On the other hand, if Lord Roberts had massacred 2,000 Boers in cold blood, to secure the safety of his own army, his behaviour, perhaps, would not have been applauded in Germany. Indeed, I myself would rather have cut off the right fingers, say, of the

¹ Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1902.

2,000 captives (under anæsthetics, of course) than shot and bayoneted them in heaps. This may be regarded as an example of humanitarian prejudice. 'Cases,' says my author, 'will indeed occur in every war where the combatants are forced to violate the literal text of conventional laws for their own safety, and in such cases recriminations may indeed be defensible for political purposes, but are, for all that, untenable.' But retaliations are apt to be practised, and on these principles surrenders will become infrequent, for all prisoners will be massacred. Mere didactic historians may preach; but if once massacres in cold blood begin, they will inevitably become the general rule.

* *

My author has occasion to mention Napoleon's intended invasion from Boulogne, and the circumstance that he turned his arms eastwards. We, with national vanity, are apt to attribute this change to an occurrence in the neighbourhood of a place called Trafalgar. The German author does not in the most distant way allude to this little incident. 'In August Napoleon said to himself, "My mind is made up. My fleet set sail from Ferrol on August 24 with thirty-four ships; it had no enemy in sight. If it obeys its orders and joins that of Brest, it will still be in time, I shall yet be master of England." "If this should not turn out so, I shall attend to what is most urgent,"' &c. It did not 'turn out so'; but why it did not turn out so, we are not informed. Nelson happened to interfere, but that is not worth mentioning.

* *

This work on Napoleon is not meant to be popular. To read it, you require to lay huge maps on the floor, and wallow upon them, like Fafnir on the gold of Andvari. The author's point is that Napoleon, as he put on years and fat, put off his genius, became a gambler in war, and, on the whole, assumed a Micawber-like attitude, expecting that 'something would turn up.' And it was stout old Blücher who 'turned up, unbeknown.' The Emperor's genius was unimpaired, but at forty he was no longer the indefatigable hero of twenty-six, with his extreme mobility, present everywhere in person. Even the most pacific of civilians can see that this view is correct. As time went on, Napoleon 'did him-

self too well,' and despised other people rather too much. He said that Wellington 'had no mind.' Wellington certainly never dreamed, like the great Corsican, of riding to India on an elephant with a new Koran, all out of his own head, in his hand. But he was not exactly an idiot. No man over forty, who has 'done himself too well,' can have the physical activity of the same man at twenty-six. He lets some things slide. He gets slack. He does not butcher 2,000 prisoners before breakfast. So our Commanders-in-Chief ought to be shelved at thirty, and no General should be more than twenty-five years of age. These are counsels of perfection. Nobody will act on them. But Napoleon was, more or less, of this civilian opinion; and my German author quotes his remark about his being 'only good for six years more,' before he was forty.

* * *

Many very pacific persons are fond of reading military history, skipping the strategy (which implies poring over maps) and coming to the 'bluggy' places. For my own part, I would recommend that the Rev. Mr. Fitchett, author of *Deeds that Won the Empire*, should be made Secretary for War. More inspiring works of--well, of military history than this clergyman's do not exist. The British do feats that would have staggered 'Roland brave and Oliver, with every paladin and peer.' This is the kind of thing, as far as my feeble hand can trace it.

* * *

'Tantia Topee held the heights of Boggleywallah with 35,000 *budmashes*, flanked by 250 *ginghals*. The banks of the Jumna were lined with the *punkahs* of the Brahmin buccaneers, fresh-water pirates who had sworn never to wash while one Sahib breathed on Indian soil. The green flag of Islam waved over 45,000 of Nana Sahib's bodyguard, Fakirs intoxicated with bang, a sea of flashing scimitars! On the other side of the river the Flag of England floated over the shattered relics, the pipers only, of the 93rd, flanked by the volunteers of the Ramsnugger Grammar School cadets, whose weapon was the pea-shooter. But Robinson was equal to the occasion. Bidding the brave Highlanders fill their pipe-bags, he led them against the Brahmin buccaneers, who at the yell of the pibroch fired a hasty volley and fled. To man their *punkahs* with his plaided veterans was, to Robinson, the

work of a moment. As the skirl of the pipes of the advancing Celts fell on the unaccustomed ears of Tantia Topee's *budmashes* they spurred to the rear, scourged by the pea-shooters of the cadets, and never halted till they had put the Hindoo Koosh between them and their pursuers. Perceiving that his centre was pierced and his left wing turned, Nana Sahib knew too much of war to hold a scientifically untenable position, and the flag of the British Raj once more waved over a subject India.' That is the way to write military history—the good old way of Major Geoghegan, Brigadier Gerard, and General Marbot. The last author said, truly, that he had fought in many battles, and had never understood a sentence of the published descriptions of any one of them. No more do I. Napoleon, according to Alexandre Dumas, lost such battles as he did lose, because he wrote such a fiendish hand. His Generals could not read his notes and letters; typewriting had not been invented; and the trembling Marshals, afraid of disobeying, and striving to interpret the indecipherable commands, loitered, wandered, and did not come up to the scratch, or not to the right scratch. Thus Waterloo was lost. Cannot you fancy Grouchy handing round Napoleon's notes on that sanguinary Sunday? 'I say,' cries the Marshal to his *aide-de-camp*, 'is that word Gembloux or Wavre? Is *this* Blücher or Bülow?' So probably Grouchy tossed up for it, and the real words may have been none of these at which he offered his conjectures. Meanwhile on the left and centre D'Erlon and Jerome and Ney were equally puzzled, and kept on sending cavalry to places where it was very uncomfortable (though our men seldom managed to hit any of the cavaliers, firing too high), and did no sort of good. Napoleon may never have been apprised of these circumstances. His old writing master was not on the scene of action. Nobody dared to say, 'Sire, what does this figure of a centipede mean, and how are we to construe these two thick strokes flanked by blots?' The Imperial temper was peppery; the great man would have torn off his interrogator's epaulettes and danced upon them. Did he not once draw his pistol to shoot a little dog that barked at his horse?¹ And when the pistol missed fire, the great soldier threw it at the dog, and did not hit him. The little dog retreated with the honours of war. Such was the temper of Napoleon, and we know what Marlborough thought of the value of an equable temper. Nobody could ask Bonaparte to write a legible hand, so his Generals lived a life of conjecture as to his

¹ *Napoleon as a General*, Von Wachtenburg, ii. 311.

meaning, and Waterloo was not a success, and the Emperor never knew why. Of all his seven or eight theories of his failure at Waterloo, his handwriting was not one. Yet, if this explanation had occurred to him, Napoleon would certainly have blamed his pens, ink, and paper. Those of Nelson, at Copenhagen, were very bad. 'If your guns are no better than your pens,' said a Danish officer (who came in under a flag of truce before the fight, and was asked to put a message into writing), 'you had better retire.' My sympathies are with Napoleon. Our writing materials are unworthy of civilisation. Pens have usually one leg longer than the other. The ink, always bad, does not flow at all, or comes down in a spate. Or, perhaps, a bad workman always blames his tools.

ANDREW LANG.

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